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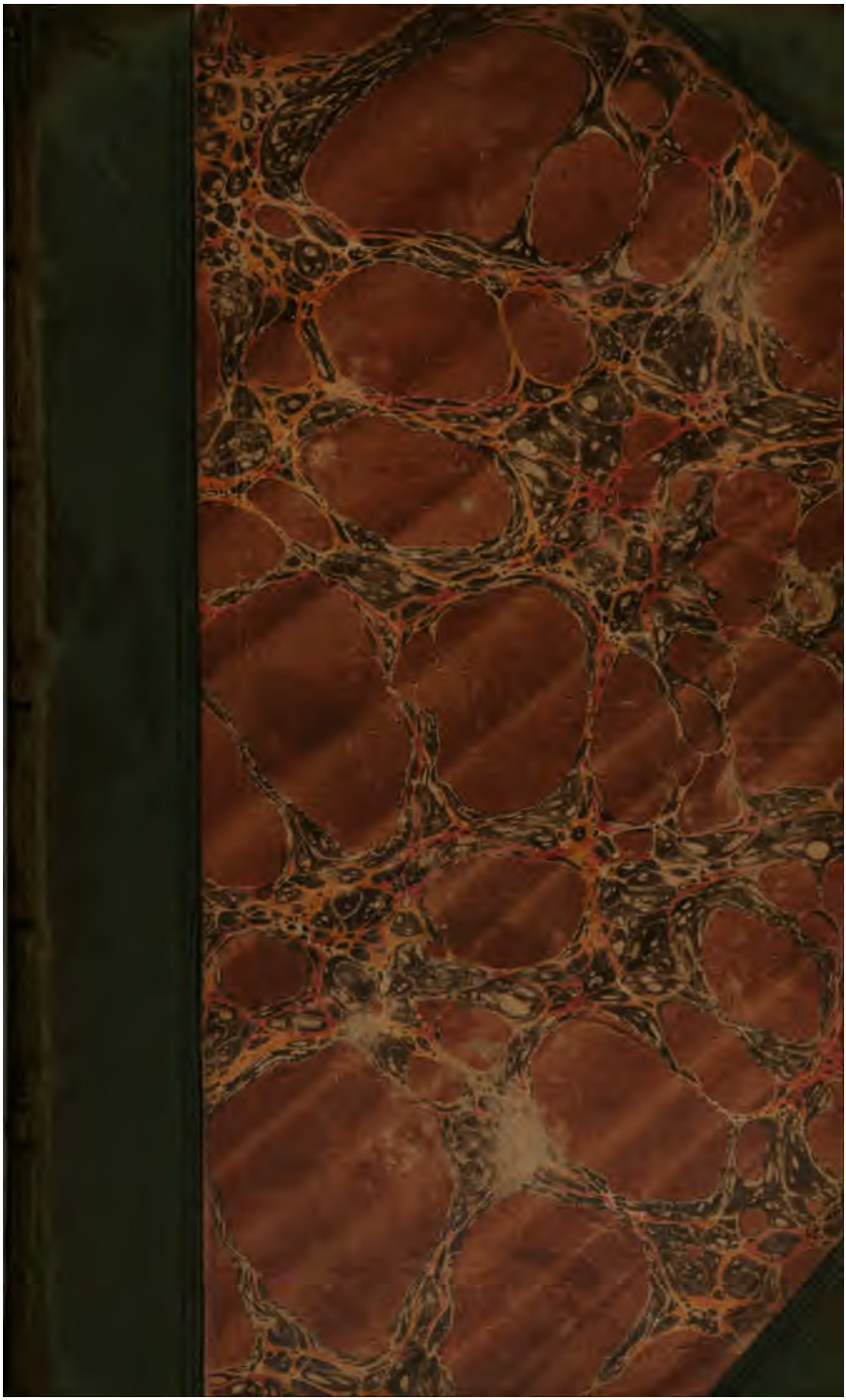

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12

AN

ESSAY

ON

THE DEMONIACS

OF THE

NEW TESTAMENT.

BY

HUGH FARMER.

Videndum est ut——sobriè sapiamus ex Dei verbo, ne pro veritate aniles fabulas substituamus. BEZA.

SECOND EDITION.

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TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

It is presumed that this volume will be found to be a very correct copy of the impression which was published by Mr. Farmer in the year 1775.

To render this edition as useful as possible, every page of it has been compared with the former, and the proper references made in the table of contents, which is a sort of index to the volume. Another index is now likewise added of all the passages of Scripture explained or referred to in the course of the work.

Gloucester Place, Camden Town,
Jan. 1, 1805.

J. J.

It is intended shortly to publish in the same form, Mr. Farmer's "Enquiry into the Nature and Design of Christ's Temptation in the Wilderness."

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THE

THE

INTRODUCTION.

In a late *Dissertation on Miracles*, the author attempted to shew, that all effects produced in the system of nature contrary to the general laws by which it is governed, are proper miracles; and that all miracles are works appropriate to God. But the case of the gospel demoniacs is by many considered as an objection against the general principle of that Dissertation, as well as against what is there advanced with respect to demons in particular. Supernatural possessions, it may be truly said, suppose the power of evil spirits to inflict diseases, and to deprive men of their reason; and, being effects produced in the system of nature contrary to the general laws by which it is governed, are therefore proper miracles; provided the account of these works here referred to be just.

In order to solve this objection, it is necessary to shew, that the disorders imputed to supernatural pos-

sessions proceed from natural causes, not from the agency of any evil spirits. This, indeed, hath been already attempted by several very eminent writers*; and, to my apprehension, not without considerable success. But, great as their merit may be, they do not seem to have placed every part of the argument in its proper light, or to have cleared it from every difficulty. Many think it necessary that some farther attempts should be made to do it justice; especially as several things have lately been urged in defence of demoniacal possessions, by a person justly celebrated both for his genius and erudition†, which could not be taken no-

* Particularly Mr. Joseph Mede, Disc. vi. p. 28; Dr. Sykes, in his Inquiry, and Farther Inquiry; Dr. Lardner, in his Case of the Demoniacs; and Dr. Mead, in his Medica Sacra, c. ix.

† Dr. Warburton, bishop of Gloucester, Sermons, vol. iii. p. 213. His lordship's zeal for the common explication of the New Testament demoniacs is the more remarkable, as in the first volume of his Sermons, p. 204, he passes a very severe censure on the doctrine of possessions, calling it "*THE SUPERSTITIOUS IMPIETY of demoniacal possessions.*" It must certainly then be worth our while to inquire, upon what grounds this able writer should now assert the real possession of the gospel demoniacs, when he had before branded the general doctrine of demoniacal possession as *superstitious* and *impious*. His defence is masterly; but it is defective, if not in argument, at least in candour towards those who differ from him in opinion, though his own, as it should seem, was once the same with theirs. He sets out with the following misrepresentation of them: *Of this superstitious fancy*, viz. possession by the devil (*they tell us*), *Jesus and his disciples took advantage, in order to impress religious horror on their followers.* Such gross abuse, intended to create unjust prejudice in his readers against those who oppose his doctrine, doth as little honour to his lordship, as service to the cause he undertook to defend.

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tice of by those learned writers. If I should happen to contribute any thing, be it ever so little, towards supplying their defects, or correcting their mistakes, or giving a satisfactory solution of the difficulties they have not removed, I shall not regret my labour, or think that it requires any apology. Indeed, the discussion of this subject was necessary to complete the design of a former publication.

Of all the objections against the miracles of Scripture, there are none that unbelievers urge with greater triumph than that drawn from the common explication of the gospel demoniacs*. Now, though we are

* Thus M. Rousseau (in his Troisième Lettre écrite de la Montagne) exclaims upon the subject: "Il y en a dans l'Evangile qu'il n'est pas même possible de prendre au pied de la lettre sans renoncer au bon sens. Tels sont, par exemple, ceux des possédés.—Jésus demande à un grouppe de démons comment il s'appelle. Quoi! Les démons ont des noms? Les anges ont des noms? Les purs esprits ont des noms? Sans doute pour s'entre-appeller entre eux, ou pour entendre quand Dieu les appelle? Mais qui leur a donné ces noms? En quelle langue en sont les mots? Quelles sont les bouches qui prononcent ces mots, les oreilles que leurs sons frappent? Ce nom c'est *Legion*; car ils sont plusieurs, ce qu'apparemment Jésus ne savoit pas. Ces anges, ces intelligences sublimes dans le mal comme dans le bien, ces êtres célestes qui ont pu se révolter contre Dieu, qui osent combattre ses décrets éternels, se logent en tas dans le corps d'un homme: forcés d'abandonner ce malheureux, ils demandent de se jetter dans une troupeau de cochons: ils l'obtiennent: ces cochons se précipitent dans la mer: & ce sont là les augustes preuves de la mission du Rédempteur du genre humain, les preuves qui doivent l'attester à tous les peuples de tous les âges, & dont nul ne sauroit douter, sous peine de damnation!—Juste Dieu! La tête tourne; on ne sait où l'on est." See also Lucian's Philopseud. p. 337. Oper. tom. ii. ed. Amstel.

not to give up any of the genuine doctrines of revelation, merely on account of groundless prejudices conceived against them; yet certainly we should be very cautious not to create just prejudices against revelation, by our misrepresentations of it*.

With respect to Christians, I see no reason why they should be alarmed at an attempt to shew that the New Testament doth not countenance the doctrine of real possessions. Can it overturn any article of their faith, that they themselves could *wish* to be true? May it not free them from many groundless terrors, and give them more honourable ideas of the divine government? May it not shew the evidence of Christianity to great advantage, as well as rescue it from the scorn of unbelievers?

Let us therefore endeavour to lay aside our prejudices, and judge according to the evidence that is set before us. The power of prejudice to blind the understanding, every one hath observed in *others*; and it must be owing to great inattention if we have not felt it in *ourselves*. Have we never, upon cool recollection, seen the force of those very arguments, which, when first proposed, appeared to be weak or inconclusive?

It may, perhaps, soften the prejudices of some persons against the opinion maintained in the following sheets, to consider that several very *antient* and eminent writers have occasionally delivered sentiments

* Videndum est ut in istis sobriè sapiamus ex Dei verbo, ne pro veritate *aniles fabulas* substituamus. Beza on Luke viii. 31.

conformable

conformable to it; or, at least, such as are equally distant from the literal sense of Scripture *. At the same time, it must be allowed that the opposite opi-

* In proof of this assertion, I will transcribe a few passages from the learned Semlerus, in his Commentatio de Dæmoniacis, (Halæ Magdeburg. p. 26. 1769.) which was put into my hands, after these papers were prepared for the press, by an ingenious friend who had perused them. Augustinus de *Genesi* ad Litter. xii. 17. forte *revera phreneticus* erat, sed propter ista dæmonium pati *putabatur*. Nempe sine piaculo et scelere hoc Augustinus scribere potuit, quum in isto opere non populum respiciat, sed intelligentibus operam dare velit. Rem eandem eloquitur alicubi Theodoretus, in Psal. xci. 6. δαιμον. ον μεσημβρινον, κατα την παρα τοις πολλοις τεθειμε δοξαν. Scimus οι πολλοι sunt imperita multitudo; loquendi consuetudinem secutus est Græcus interpres, non dæmonium incursitans ipse confirmavit. Agobardus epistola ad Barthol. Ita ut caderent quidam more epilepticorum, vel eorum quos *vulgus* dæmoniacos *putat* vel *nominat*. Cæsarius quæstione CXII. Σελημαζομενους φησι κατα την προχειρον των πολλων υποψιαν, μη χαρτων ακουσαι το ὑψηλοτερον. Vulgata in opinione imperitiorum hanc phrasin dicit fundari. Observat Eustathius in Iliad. α, 65, 48, Dianam haberi αιτιαν μανιων, ὡς οιον ειπειν, τοις σελημαζομενοις. Ista Wetstenius collegit; quibus hæc illa addo. Damascen. in Sacris Parallel. tomo ii. edit. Le Quien, p. 470, ex homilia falsò Chrysostomo tributa, μεγας ὁ δαιμων, ἡ ἁμαρτια. Cyril. Hierosol. Catech. 16, 7, καλειται δε πνευμα και ἡ ἁμαρτια. Chrysostomus, Homilia 65. in Joan. τον απο της οψεως τω χρυσιω—επιπηδωντα τη ψυχη δαιμονα. Augustin. in Ps. xc. (xci. Hebraice) Sermone i. recte hic intelligimus per dæmonium meridianum, vehementem persecutionem. Magdalenæ septem dæmonia, *plurima vitia* interpretatur Gregorius M. & Theophylactus, excitante *Bened. Pererio* disput. x. in cap. xi. Joan. p. 21. licet ipse 7 dæmones, spiritus præferat. p. 26, 27. not. 18.

More proofs of our assertion might be produced. See Wetstein's very learned note on Matt. iv. 24. and compare what occurs in the following sheets, ch. i. sect. 9. I will only add here a passage from Calvin, on John xiii. 27. Nimis vero insulse delirant, qui diabolum fingunt essentialiter, ut loquuntur, Judam intrasse.

nion can boast of many learned and able advocates. The proper question before us is, Which of these two opinions is best supported by reason and by revelation? If we have cultivated a sincere and prevailing affection for truth, our inquiries will be conducted with a generous disregard of all human authority, which is too commonly engaged on the side of error.

AN

AN

ESSAY

ON THE

DEMONIACS

OF THE

NEW TESTAMENT.

FIRST of all, I will endeavour to explain and establish the true meaning of demoniacs in the New Testament:

In the next place, attempt to solve the several objections that have been urged against that explication;

And then point out the advantages of it, and the inconveniences attending the common interpretation of this subject.

CHAPTER I.

I WILL endeavour to explain and establish the true meaning of demoniacs in the New Testament.

Whatever is necessary to our forming a just idea of the gospel demoniacs, will be comprised under the ten following propositions.

SECTION I.

Prop. I. *The spirits that were thought to take possession of men's bodies, are called in the New Testament demons, not devils.*

THE Greek word* from whence comes the English name *devil,* when used in the singular number in the New Testament, is generally supposed to refer to one particular evil spirit†, the chief of the fallen angels: but at the same time it must be allowed by all, that even according to the translation now in use, when the same Greek word occurs in the plural number, it is never applied to any evil spirits‡. Indeed, we often meet with the term *devils* in the English translation; but in all these instances that of *demons*§ is used in the original. Strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless an undoubted fact, that there is not a single passage in the New Testament, in which the devil or devils are spoken of in reference to the present subject‖. Though *possessed persons* are so very frequently

* Διαβολος.

† In the following passages, Matt. iv. 1. ch. xxv. 41. Acts x. 38. ch. xiii. 10. Ephes. vi. 11. Jam. iv. 7. 1 Pet. v. 8. Rev. xii. 9.

‡ It occurs only in the following passages: *Their wives must be—not slanderers,* (μη διαβολους, not devils) 1 Tim. iii. 11. *In the last times, men will be* (διαβολοι, devils) *false accusers,* 2 Tim. iii. 3. In like manner, in Tit. ii. 3. aged women are forbidden to be (διαβολους, devils) *false accusers.*

§ Δαιμονες, δαιμονια.

‖ That Acts x. 38. is no exception, will be shewn below, sect. v.

quently* mentioned in the Gospels, they are not, on any occasion whatever, said *to have*, or *to be possessed by, the devil.* They are uniformly and invariably described as having, or being possessed by, a *demon* or *demons.* Beelzebub is called the prince of *demons*†, not of *devils.* It would therefore be foreign from our present subject to inquire who the devil is.

It is indeed commonly apprehended, that demons and their prince are the very same spirits as the devil and his angels. In support of this opinion, the abettors of it argue in the following manner‡: "Satan and Beelzebub are names for the same person: for, when Christ was reproached with casting out demons by the assistance of the prince of demons, he replied, *How can Satan cast out Satan*§? Now, if Satan, who is considered as the same person with the devil‖, was the prince of those demons who were cast out by Christ; then demons are the same spirits as the devil's angels. And on this supposition, there can be no other difference between demons and the devil; than

* In describing persons possessed, the word δαιμονιον occurs in the Gospels fifty-two times; δαιμων three; and δαιμονιζομαι, thirteen; though διαβολος doth not occur so much as once in reference to possessions, either in the Gospels or in any other part of the New Testament.

† Matt. xii. 24. Mark iii. 12.

‡ See Pegge's Answer to Sykes, and the learned Dr. Doddridge on Matt. xii. 25. Fam. Expos. vol. i. p. 372, note g, and also vol. ii. p. 82, note c, 2d edit.

§ Matt. xii. 26. Mark iii. 26. Luke xi. 18.

‖ Rev. ix. 12. Compare Matt. iv. 1, with Mark i. 12.

that which subsists between a prince and his subjects, who both partake of one common nature, though the prince, as presiding over the rest, hath a peculiar name of his own." It is observable that Dr. Sykes, who maintained that demons and their prince were a different order of spirits from the devil and his angels, never replied to this objection, though frequently urged against him by several eminent writers. And Dr. Lardner* seems to admit its force. For he says, "the devil is often called Satan and Beelzebub."

It doth not, however, seem to me to follow from the passage under consideration, that the devil is ever called Beelzebub. For the term *Satan* is not appropriated to one particular person or spirit, but signifies an *adversary*, or *opponent*, in general. The Jews called every demon by this name, and used it in the plural number. Samael is styled by them *the prince of satans* †. Nay, the very words of our Saviour, *How can Satan cast out Satan?* if taken in their strictest sense, imply that there were several satans. And our Lord might only mean, *that it was unreasonable to suppose that one demon would cast out another.* Or if you understand him to the following purpose: "Were Beelzebub, whom you regard as the chief of the *possessing* demons, to expel himself, which would in ef-

* Case of the Demoniacs, p. 42. See also p. 36. In what manner the author of a *Review of the Controversy concerning Demoniacs* attempted to solve this difficulty, the reader may see by consulting p. 79. Compare *Remarks* on that Tract, p. 17.

† And *the prince of all the satans.* See Dr. Doddridge on Matt. xii. 25. vol. i. p. 372. and Ode's Commentar. de Angelis, p. 611.

fect

fect be the case were he to expel his agents and instruments, he would act against his own interest, and defeat his own schemes:" it will not follow from hence, that Beelzebub was considered as the same person with the devil. It doth not appear that there is any reference here to the latter. He and Beelzebub might be regarded as two distinct persons, and yet each be called *satan:* a word that the Scripture itself very common applies to every one who is *an adversary*, or acts in *opposition* to another*. Indeed, if Beelzebub and his demons

* The angel of the Lord is called *satan*, Numb. xxii. 22. *God's anger was kindled against Balaam, because he went: and the angel of the Lord stood in the way* לשטן *for a satan or adversary against him.* In the 32d verse of the same chapter, the angel says, *I went out to withstand thee*, which in the original is, *to be a satan* (לשטן) *or adversary to thee.* The word is also very frequently applied to men. *Let not David go down with us to battle*, (said the princes of the Philistines), *lest in the battle he be* לשטן *a satan or adversary to us*, 1 Sam. xxix. 4. *What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be* לשטן *a satan or adversary to me?* 2 Samuel xix. 22. *The Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary* (שטן) *nor evil occurrent.* 1 Kings v. 4. See also 1 Kings xi. 14. 23. 25. Psal. xxxviii. 20. Psal. lxxi. 13. Psal. cix. 4. 20. 29. In the New Testament Christ says to Peter, Matt. xvi. 23. *Get thee behind me, satan*, "You act rather as *an enemy*, than as a friend, in dissuading me from submitting to sufferings and death." St. Paul, in 2 Cor. xii. 7. says, *Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of satan to buffet me.* In the original it is not αγγελος του σατανα, "the angel *of* Satan," but αγγελος σατανα, *an angel satan*, or *adversary.* The best commentators suppose that the bodily affliction, or *thorn in the flesh*, here referred to, was some *paralytic* symptom, called elsewhere *the infirmity of the flesh*, Gal. iv. 13. In confirmation of this opinion it may be observed, that the word ασθενια used

demons were in our Saviour's time conceived to be the very same persons as the devil and his angels, is it not very surprising, that the New Testament, in its original language, should always speak of the diseased persons under consideration, as possessed by *a demon* or *demons*, and never by *the devil* or *devils?* a word, as all must allow, that is never there applied to evil spirits in the plural number, whatever its use may be in the singular. I add, that inasmuch as Christ is here replying to the Pharisees, and reasoning with them on their own principles*, he cannot be supposed to speak of a different order of beings from what they did. Satan therefore must be equivalent to demon, in the sense in which demon was used by them, which will be explained hereafter. And should it then appear that by demons and their prince they understood human spirits, it will from hence follow, that Christ cannot be speaking of spirits of a celestial origin.

used here in the original, is that by which both the New Testament writers and the Greek physicians describe the palsy. This disorder seems to have been occasioned by the splendour of his visions affecting the nervous system; and was purposely designed by God, not merely to prevent a too great elation in the apostle, but, by taking off from the gracefulness and energy of his delivery, to render the divine power more conspicuous in the success of his ministry. It is impossible that St. Paul should refer this disorder to the devil; he speaks of it as proceeding from God, or (which is the same) his *angel* acting the part of an *adversary* to the apostle; to whom this dispensation of divine Providence was exceedingly humiliating and painful, however wisely designed by God.

* Dissertation on Miracles, p. 338, 8vo. edit. or 248, 12mo. edit.

SECTION

SECTION II.

Prop. II. *By demons, whenever the word occurs in reference to possessions, either in the Scriptures or other antient writings, we are to understand, not fallen angels, but the pagan deities, such of them as had once been men.*

WE have elsewhere* examined the meaning of *demons*, when applied to the objects of popular worship in the heathen world; and shewn from the united testimony of Pagans and Jews, from the authors of the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, and from the writers of the New, that we are hereby to understand such human spirits as superstition deified. We are now to inquire whether the word be not used in the same sense by all the antients, when they speak upon the subject of POSSESSIONS.

I. With regard to the *heathens*, it is well known that they advanced human spirits to the rank of gods and demons; and that they judged them capable of entering the bodies of mankind, and of producing *phrensy* and *distraction*; which, as will be shewn below, was regarded as the most usual effect of demoniacal possession. Prophesying amongst the heathens was attended with rage and madness†. Almost all their oracles belonged to that species of divination

* Dissertation on Miracles, ch. iii. sect. 2.

† Not only the *Pythia* at Delphi, but the *Sibyls* also, swelled with rage, and were beside themselves. See Virgil. Æn. vi. 77. Quid vero habet auctoritatis furor iste quem divinum vocatis, ut, quæ sapiens non videat, ea videat insanus; et is, qui humanos sensus amiserit, divinos assecutus sit? Cicer. de Divinat. lib. ii. cap. 54.

which

which was by *fury*, such as was imputed to the power and presence of their gods. And that these gods were deified men, appears from the oracles of Jupiter, the chief of all the prophetic divinities; of Apollo, who, next to Jupiter, excelled most in the faculty of inspiring predictions, and who had a celebrated temple at Delos, the reputed place of his birth; of Trophonius, Amphiaraus, and other men, who after death were translated to the gods.

The terms employed by the *Greeks** to describe persons *inspired, possessed,* and *disordered in their understandings,*

* They are called Θεοφορητοι, Æschyl. Agamemnon, v. 1149. Strabo, lib. xii. p. 535. D. ed. Paris. 1620. p. 809, ed. Amstelodami, 1707. ——Θεολητοι, Plutarch. de Herodot. Malignitate, p. 855.—— δαιμονιζομενοι, (which shews that the gods by whom these persons were possessed were demons) Plutarch. Sympos. lib. vii. quæst. 5. prop. fin. Vide Plutarch. de Fluviis, p. 1159, πωϛ δε προϛ τουϛ δαιμονιζομενουϛ. Lucian describes them by a similar word, τωϛ δαιμονωντας, Philopseudes, p. 337. vol. ii. ed. Amstelodami. Concerning an exorcist it is there said, εξελαυνει τον δαιμονα, abigit dæmonem, p. 338 (*a*)——Ευρυκλειται, from Euricles, see Hesychius, Suidas, or Vandale de Idolat. p. 648, 649——πυθωνες, Schol. in Aristophan. Vesp. 1014. p. 314. ed. Kuster. Plutarch. de Orac. defect. p. 414. E. Dissert. on Miracles, p. 275——φοιβολητοι or φοιβολαμπτοι, Plutarch. in Pompeio, et Herodot. lib. iv. p. 229. c. 13.—and νυμφολητοι, Plato in Phæd. p. 1216. E. et p. 1218. F.

(*a*) It may be worth while to inquire in what sense *demon* is used in this Dialogue of Lucian. *Ion*, after he had given an account of the person who cast out demons, adds, *that he himself had seen one* (that is, a demon) *so ejected. Many others as well as you*, said *Eucrates, have met with demons* (δαιμονιν). *I have a thousand times seen such things.* In proof of this assertion, he assures the company, that he and his family had often seen the statue of Pelichus descending from his pedestal, and walking round the house, p. 338, 339. In the sequel of the dialogue, *Eucrates*, who had been defending the doctrine of apparitions, says, *We have been endeavouring to persuade Tychiades*, (who sustains

derstandings, serve to shew, that the spirits by whom these persons were thought to be actuated were not *fallen angels*, but the gods the heathens worshipped; particularly such as were of human origin, or mere fictions of the imagination. This observation holds true also with respect to the terms employed to describe the same persons by the *Latins**. We are indeed expressly informed by Hippocrates, that the Greeks referred possession to their gods, particularly the mother of the gods, Neptune, Mars, Apollo, He-

* They are called by the *Latins*, Lymphatici, Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xxv. c. 5. p. 386, ed. Harduin. These answer to the νυμφολήπτοι of the Greeks. Veteres Græci Nympham dicebant, quam nos mutatione unius literæ Lympham, hoc est, aquam. Calepin. Dictionar.— Bacchantes. Bacchæ bacchanti si velis advorsarier, ex insanâ insaniorem facies. Plaut. Amphit. act. ii. sc. 2. v. 71. See Herodot. lib. iv. c. 79. et Curtius, viii. 33. Some persons are described by Pliny, (Nat. Hist. lib. xxx. c. 10. sect. 24.) as agitated a nocturnis diis, Faunisque. The Fauni were the gods of the fields, and sprang from Faunus, the father of Latinus. Concerning the Cerriti and Larvati, see note §, p. 16.

sustains the character of an unbeliever in these points,) *that there are demons* (δαιμονας τινας εἶναι) *and that the phantasms and souls of the dead wander upon the earth, and appear to whom they please*, p. 346. To confirm this sentiment, *Diognotus*, the Pythagorean, bids *Tychiades* go to Corinth, where he might see the very house from which he himself had expelled *the demon* (τον δαίμονα) that disturbed it, which was the ghost of a dead man, p. 348. Nor doth it appear that the word *demon* is in any part of the Dialogue applied to any other than human spirits. The demoniacs therefore, of whom he speaks in this Dialogue, must be possessed by such spirits. He uses demon in the same sense on other occasions. Εασον αναπαυσασθαι τους των μακαριτων δαιμονας. Sine quiescant defuncti manes. De Luctu, tom. ii. p. 307. In his Charon, sive Contemplantes, vol. i. 358, he introduces Mercury as informing Charon, that men believed that the souls of the departed feasted upon the libations and sacrifices that were offered them; which is what he elsewhere, as well as others, affirms concerning demons. Πεπιστευκασι δ' ἐν τας ψυχας αναπεμπομενας. κ. τ. λ. Compare his Menippus seu Necyomantia, p. 328, 329.

cate,

cate, and the heroes*, who were all human spirits. The design of his treatise on the *Epilepsy* † is to shew, that this disorder was neither more *divine* nor *sacred* than other disorders; in opposition to priests, magicians, and impostors, who referred it more immediately to the gods, and undertook to cure it by expiations and charms ‡. And we are certain that, amongst the Latins, the spirits that actuated the Cerriti and Larvati (who most exactly answered to the demoniacs of the New Testament) were no other than deified human ghosts §.

Such

* Vide p. 303. Oper. ed. Foesii, Genev. 1657. This passage will be cited below, ch. ii. sect. 3. no. 3.

† Περὶ Ἱερῆς νούσου.

‡ Vide Hippocrat. Oper. p. 301, 302, 303. 307. 310.

§ The Cerriti and Larvati. The Cerriti derived their names from Ceres, the daughter of Saturn. In Cereris sacris furore corripiebantur. Et sicut à Baccho Bacchantem dicimus, sic à Cerere Cerritum. Calepini Dictionar.

As to the Larvati, *lar* aut *lars* est Hetrusca vox. It signifies *a prince*, or a *lord*; which last word is supposed to be derived from *lar*. See Ainsworth and Littleton on this word. It was applied not only to their *domestic*, but also to their *celestial* gods, the dii majorum gentium, who were all natives of this lower world; and answers to the word δαίμων. Quos Græci δαίμονας, nostri, opinor, Lares. Cicer. in Timæo, 3. That the demons of the Greeks were deified men and women, we have shewn elsewhere. Arnobius says, Varro—nunc antiquorum sententias sequens larvas esse dicit lares, quasi quosdam genios et functorum animas mortuorum. Adv. Gentes, lib. iii. p. 124. A laribus larvæ. Larvæ gentibus erant mortuorum animæ, quas aliter *umbras* vocabant. Vide Littleton.

The ghosts of the deceased were distinguished by different names, according to their different dispositions and functions. The larvæ were considered as mischievous spirits. What Apuleius says on this subject, in his book De Deo Socratis, is as follows: Secundo signatu species

Such were the sentiments of the heathens concerning possessing demons in every age, and particularly in that in which the gospel was first published. Strabo, who flourished in the time of Augustus, calls the goddess Feronia (who was born in Italy) *a demon;* and says, that those who were *possessed by this demon** walked barefoot over burning coals. Philostratus, in his life of Apollonius Tyanæus, who was contemporary with Christ, relates, that a demon who possessed

species *dæmonum* animus humanus, exutus et liber stipendiis vitæ, corpore suo abjuratis. Hunc vetere Latinâ linguâ reperio Lemurem (*a*) dictitatum. Ex his ergo Lemuribus, qui posteriorum suorum curam sortitus, pacato et quieto numine domum possidet, *Lar* dicitur familiaris. Qui verò propter adversa vitæ merita, nullis bonis sedibus incerta vagatione, ceu quodam exilio, punitur, inane terriculamentum bonis hominibus, cæterùm noxium malis, id genus plerique *Larvas* perhibent. Cùm verò incertum est, quæ cuique eorum sortitio evenerit, utrùm Lar sit, an Larva; nomine *Manem* deum nuncupant (*b*)" —Larvatus is derived from Lars, or rather from Larva, and is generally explained by larvâ indutus, vel dæmone possessus. A larvis furiosi insanique vocantur larvati. I agree with a learned writer, (Crito, vol. i. p. 238) that the larvati are demoniacs; but the larvæ with which they were possessed were human ghosts. Consequently such also demons were.

* Φερωνια πολις εστιν ἐμψυχους ἐπιχωρια τινι δαιμονι——οἱ κατεχομενοι ὑπο της δαιμονος ταυτης. Strabo, lib. v. p. 346.

(*a*) Mox etiam Lemures animas dixere silentum. Ovid. Fast. l. 5.

(*b*) St. Austin (De Civ. Dei, lib. ix. c. 11.) gives the following account of the sentiments of the Platonists on this subject, of such of them especially as he supposed best understood Plato. Dicit quidem et animas hominum dæmones esse, et ex hominibus fieri Lares, si meriti boni sunt; Lemures seu Larva, si mali. Manes autem deos dici, cum incertum est, bonorum eos, seu malorum esse meritorum.—Larvas quippe dicit esse noxios dæmones ex hominibus factos. Sed hinc alia quæstio est. Inde autem perhibet appellari Græcè beatos εὐδαιμονας, quòd boni sint animi, hoc est, boni dæmones, animos quoque hominum dæmones esse confirmans.

a young

a young man confessed himself to be *the ghost of a person slain in battle**.

II. Let us proceed to inquire what were the sentiments of the Jews concerning those demons which were thought to possess mankind. The whole history of this people furnishes a melancholy proof of their great proneness to adopt the principles and practices of their superstitious and idolatrous neighbours. In the time of our Saviour, the Greek learning (originally built on the philosophy of the East) was greatly studied and admired by the Jews, and had infected even the lowest ranks of men. It is natural therefore to suppose that those amongst them, who, like their heathen neighbours, believed in real possessions, would ascribe these effects to the same spirits as they did. What is so highly probable in theory will, perhaps, upon inquiry, appear to be true in fact.

In proof of this point, I would first of all produce a passage from the evangelical history, which is generally urged to establish the contrary doctrine. I refer to the language of the Pharisees, when they made the following objection to Christ's cure of demoniacs: *He casteth out demons by Beelzebub*, (or, as it is in the Greek, Beelzebul,) *the prince of demons*†. In the late controversy concerning demoniacs, it

* Εξηγορευσεν ὁ δαιμων ἑαυτον,—και· δητα ειλεγεν ειναι μεν ειδωλον ανδρος, ὃς πολεμω ποτε απ θανεν. Dæmon quisnam esset confessus est—nempe aiebat se umbram hominis esse in bello olim interfecti. Vit. Apollonii Tyan. lib. iii. c. 38. p. 128.

† Matt. x. 25. ch. xii. 24. 27. Mark iii. 22. Luke xi. 15. 18, 19.

was

was confidently asserted by one party, and either allowed or not disputed by the other, "that Beelzebub is the name which the Jews gave to the prince of fallen angels; and that it was given him by way of derision; Beelzebub being the same with Baalzebub, and signifying, as that doth, *the lord of a fly*." Now were it true that Beelzebub is a fallen angel, demons, without doubt, are spirits of the same order. But what hath been asserted by some with regard to this matter, and too readily granted by others, hath never yet been proved. The point deserves to be carefully considered.

We learn from the Old Testament, that *Ahaziah sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover of this disease**. From this passage it clearly appears, that Beelzebub was a god of the Philistines, and had a temple and oracle at Ekron. It likewise appears, that this name was not given him by way of contempt; because it was used by Ahaziah at the very time he was acknowledging his divinity, and desirous of consulting him concerning his recovery. This is farther evident from the true meaning of this name, and the reason of its being given. History informs us, what we may easily credit, that those who lived in hot climates, and where the soil is moist, (which was the case of the Ekronites, who bordered upon the sea,) were exceedingly infested with flies. These insects were sometimes thought to cause contagious distempers. Pliny makes mention of a people who stopped

* 2 Kings i. 2.

a pestilence

a pestilence which they occasioned, by sacrificing to the *fly-hunting god**. It seems not improbable, that some imagined cure of this kind, or a general persuasion of his power of driving away flies from the places they frequented, might be the reason why the god of Ekron was called Beelzebub†. For it was customary with the heathens to call their gods by the name of those insects from which they were believed to deliver their worshippers‡. *The god of flies* §, *and the fly-hunter* ‖, were titles ascribed by the Greeks to Jupiter, as well as to Hercules¶. Now, inasmuch as Beelzebub is a title of honour, and such as might be, and certainly was, applied to the god of Ekron by his worshippers, it can hardly be doubted but that it

* Invocant Elei myiagron deum, muscarum multitudine pestilentiam afferente; quæ protinus intereunt, postquam litatum est ei deo. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. x. c. 28. § 40.

† Some of the Greek Fathers thought that this *fly god* was worshipped under the *form* of a fly. And Dr. Young (on Idolatry, vol. ii. p. 91, 92.) observes, that it was customary with the heathens to represent their gods by some creatures that were sacred to them. But the supposed power of this god over that noxious insect, the fly, seems to me the most probable reason of the name of Beelzebub.

‡ Sic Hercules dictus ἀποτροπος, interemptor vermiculorum vites infestantium, qui Græcis ἀπες. Item κωνωπιος, culicum depulsor Oetæis cultus. Lomierus de vet. Gent. Lustrationibus, p. 23. Vide etiam Bochart. Hierozoic. par. II. lib. iv. c. 9. Oper. vol. iii. p. 500, et par. I. lib. i. c. 5. Oper. vol. ii. p. 36. et Selden. de Dis Syr. Syntag. ii. c. 6. p. 228, ed. Amstel. 1680.

§ Μυΐωδης, muscarum deus.

‖ Μυΐαγρος, muscarum venator.

¶ Απομυιον Διὶ Θυουσιν Ηλειοι, Ῥωμαιοι δὲ Απομυιον Ἡρακλει, Clem. Alexandrinus in Protreptico.

was

was in use amongst the Philistines, as well as amongst the Jews*. Whatever opinion the latter had formed of the moral character of the prince of demons, yet even they did not call him Beelzebub by way of derision, notwithstanding the seeming meanness of this term, *the lord of flies*. For the Jews had learned of the heathens to regard a power of driving away these noxious insects as *a divine prerogative*; endeavouring to persuade men†, that the temple of Jerusalem, though so many sacrifices were offered there daily, never had a fly upon it; thus *copying*, rather than *deriding*, what the heathens fabled concerning some of their temples, into which (according to Pliny, Solinus, and others) no fly could enter‡.

Upon

* Bochart says, Itaque nomen Beelzebub tam apud Philistæos quam apud Israelitas in usu fuisse reor. And Selden (ubi supra, p. 227) uses stronger language, Mihi persuasissimum est, Accaronitis ipsis eum Baalzebub dictum.

† In Pirke Avoth, c. v. § 6, 7. Non conspecta est musca in domo mactationis.

‡ Should it be said "that the Greek word used in the New Testament is not Beelzebub, but Beelzebul, which signifies *the lord of a dunghill*; and therefore that this name could not have been used by the heathens, but must have been given by the Jews in derision:" I answer, 1. That many learned men suppose that the final b was sometimes changed into l in the antient languages. Bochart (Hieroz. par. II. lib. iv. c. 9. p. 501.) and Grotius (on Matt. x. 25.) have given instances of such changes. On this supposition, the Greek word will agree with the Hebrew, 2 Kings i. 2. 2. If Beelzebul be used as a different name from Beelzebub, there will nevertheless be no reason to suppose that it was given by the Jews, or that it was expressive of contempt. When the Jews reproached the heathen gods as *dung*, they

Upon what grounds then is it concluded, that by Beelzebub we are to understand the devil, if by the devil be meaned a fallen angel? Can this be proved from the import of the name? There is no kind of affinity between Beelzebub and devil either in sound or meaning. Were the Jews accustomed to call the devil by the name of Beelzebub? The very contrary appears from their antient writings, in which he is called Asmodæus*. This is a great objection against the common hypothesis. The difficulty was felt and confessed by Bochart, Selden, and others†. But these learned

they use a different word, גרולים, 2 Kings xxi. 21. Ezek. vi. 4. If zebul be derived from זבל zebel, stercus, it corresponds to κοπρος in the Orphic verses, Ζευ κυδιστε, μεγιστε Θεων, ειλυμενε κοπρω, *Jupiter! most illustrious, the greatest of the gods, wrapt in dung.* What Clemens Alexandrinus says of the Stoics is agreeable to the doctrine of Orpheus, and to that of the pagans in general, δια πασης ὑλης, και δια της ατιμοτατης, το Θειον διηκειν λεγοντας. Cohort. p. 58. ed. Oxon. The Hebrew word זבול zebul, properly signifies *a habitation*, and (as Stockius observes) is applied to the heavens, the mansion of the deity. This agrees with the title of Beelsamen or Baalsemin, *the lord of heaven*, which the Ekronites and other Phœnicians gave to their supreme numen. Whether therefore Beelzebub and Beelzebul be different names, or the same name with different terminations, they describe the person whom the heathens regarded as their chief deity.

* See Selden and Bochart in the places referred to in the next note.

† Bochart, vol. iii. p. 501, says, Difficilior est quæstio, cur Pharisæi sive Beelzebub, sive Beelzebul, dæmonem principem esse voluerint, qui Hebræorum aliis est אשמודי Asmodæus. Selden, p. 231, freely owns, Ob quam rem ad principem dæmoniorum denotandum usurpetur Beelzebub aut Beelzebul (dum tamen innuebant Beelzebub) fateor cum Origine, me omnino latere.—Neque hunc faciunt Ebræorum

learned men did not advert, that the Pharisees were not speaking of the devil. It is indeed in the highest degree improbable, that there should be any reference here to the devil, for this farther reason, that he is never spoken of in Scripture as *possessing* men's bodies; this was deemed the peculiar office of demons. Beelzebub was the prince of *the possessing demons*, in the estimation of the Pharisees; and therefore, in their estimation, was a human spirit; as will be shewn immediately upon the express testimony of a learned Pharisee. Lastly, Beelzebub was a heathen deity: for he is spoken of here as a demon, which was the usual appellation of the heathen deities; he is expressly called in the Old Testament the god of Ekron, and is represented by the Pharisees under the very same title and character as the heathens themselves ascribed to their gods. The Pharisees therefore, under this title, did not refer to a different person from what the heathens did. Now, if Beelzebub was a heathen demon or deity, he was no other than a deified human spirit: for such were all the heathen demons, who were the more immediate objects of the public established worship*, and those in particular

orum monimenta dæmoniorum principem, sed Ashmodæum potius. —Hunc memorat Elias in Thisbi, qui eidem *Samael* etiam scribit vocabulo fuisse. Volunt autem Samaëlem proprium esse Diaboli nomen, qui primos parentes fefellit.'

* That *demon* was the term used both by Heathens and Jews to describe deified human spirits, is shewn in Dissertation on Miracles, p. 174. 198, 8vo edit. or 109, 122, 12mo. See likewise below, sect. x.

to

to whom divination and oracles were ascribed *. And if the prince of demons was of human extract, no doubt his subjects were so likewise †.

That the spirits who were supposed to possess mankind were thought by the Jews to be such human spirits as became demons after their departure from the body, appears with still clearer evidence from the express testimony of Josephus, the learned Pharisee referred to above. This writer was nearly contemporary with the apostles, and wrote in the same language as they did. He was well acquainted with the sentiments of his countrymen with respect to possessions. The expulsion of demons was indeed a favourite subject with him. He hath entertained his readers with a long account of the method of effecting it, and described what appeared to him to be an instance of its success, when tried by a Jew in the presence of Vespasian ‡. In order to raise the character of Solomon, who makes so distinguished a figure in the

* See above, p. 14.

† It is no inconsiderable confirmation of the explication given above of the prince of demons, that the heathens (whose language the Pharisees adopt) apply the same or a similar term to a human spirit. In the Alcestis of Euripides, Hercules is introduced as saying, v. 1140, Μαχην συναψας δαιμονων τω κοιρανω. Commissâ pugnâ cum *rege dæmonum*, which the scholiast explains by τω των νεκρων κυριω, adding, φασι γαρ τους νεκρους δαιμονας. By demons we are here necessarily to understand *the dead*; and by *the prince of demons* is probably meaned Pluto, the son of Saturn, brother of Jupiter and Neptune. He was called *Summanus*, q. summus manium, August. de Civ. Dei, lib. iv. c. 23.

‡ Antiq. l. viii. c. 2. § 5.

Jewish

Jewish history, he scruples not to affirm, that he was instructed by God in *the anti-demoniac art* *. From a writer of this turn of mind, we are not to expect any thing to be said unnecessarily in diminution of the power of demons. For, the greater their power is, the greater glory would those acquire, who could give proper evidence of their being able to control and expel them. Nevertheless, Josephus says that *demons are the spirits of wicked men, who enter the living, and kill those who receive no help* †: language too clear and express to be perverted by the power of criticism.

III. Let us now inquire in what sense it is most reasonable to understand demons, when used in reference to possessions by Christ and his apostles.

It hath been said, that "this word carries a different meaning in the sacred writings from what it did in the profane; or, that our Saviour and the evangelists used it in a sense peculiar to themselves." How does this appear? It ought not to be presumed, or taken for granted, that any person whatever, who hath no intention to deceive, uses words in a sense different from the rest of the world, unless he gives express notice of his so doing. Whoever assumes a liberty of giving a new meaning to words, without explaining it, cannot intend to enlighten, but to con-

* Την κατα των δαιμονιων τεχνην, Antiq.

† Τα γαρ καλουμενα δαιμονια, ταυτα δε ποιηρων εστιν ανθρωπων πνευματα, τοις ζωσιν εισδυομενα, και κτεινοντα τους βιηθειας μη τυγχανοντας. De Bello Jud. lib. vii. c. 6. § 3. The demoniacs of Josephus answer to the larvati of the Romans.

found or insult the understandings of men. A conduct of this kind would be peculiarly heinous in an instructor of the people, who never look farther than to the obvious and ordinary sense of words, of such especially as occur continually in common conversation. Shall we then cast so foul a reproach as this on Christ and his apostles, charge them with guilt of the deepest dye? Shall we take it for granted, that they were thus guilty, without the least shadow of proof?

The sacred writers have not particularly explained the sense in which they use the word demon. Now, is it not a natural inference from hence, that they use this word, as they do all others, in its *common* and *ordinary* signification? If they had assigned it a *new* and *peculiar* meaning, would not they have given us notice of their doing it? Was not such notice necessary, to prevent mistakes?

The Greek language, in the age of the Gospel, was very generally spoken in all the cultivated parts of the world, not only by the Gentiles, but by the Jews also who were dispersed amongst them, and even by the inhabitants of Judea. It is the language in which the New Testament was written, which was designed for the use of the bulk of mankind. Demon in this language was not a new word*, invented by the sacred writers to express their own peculiar opinions, but was in daily use with all men in their age, as it had been for ages before. Now, can it be reasonably supposed that these writers, when they adopted this

* Dissertation on Miracles, p. 174, 8vo, or p. 110, 12mo. Compare Matt. xv. 22. John viii. 48. 52.

word,

word, were ignorant of its usual signification, which was that of a pagan deity, or deified man? We are certain they were not ignorant of this signification of it; for they have recorded an instance amongst the heathens, in which it could not be applied to any other than deified human spirits*. To such spirits, they likewise knew, the word was applied in the Jewish Scriptures, I mean, in the Septuagint version† of them, with which they were intimately acquainted. Nay, it is allowed that they do themselves employ this term to describe the heathen gods‡, and other deified or beatified human spirits§. From these premises we may conclude, that by demons, when used in reference to possessions, by the writers of the New Testament, they meant such human spirits as were thought to become demons after death; unless some good reason can be given for their assigning this word a meaning on this subject, quite different from that which the heathens, the authors of the Septuagint, and they themselves, assign it on other occasions.

* Acts xvii. 18. *He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange demons* or *gods.* See Dissertation on Miracles, p. 203, 204, 8vo, or p. 129, 12mo.

† Id. p. 198, 8vo, or p. 125, 12mo. See also below, sect. x.

‡ 1 Cor. x. 20, 21. See below, sect. x. and Dissertation on Miracles, p. 201, 8vo, or p. 127, 12mo.

§ 1 Tim. iv. 1. *Giving heed to doctrines concerning demons.* See Dissertation on Miracles, p. 167, 8vo, or p. 105, 12mo. In Rev. xvi. 14. mention is made of *the spirits of demons working miracles;* by which Mr. Pyle understands pretences to inspiration and miracles, in confirmation of the doctrines of *ghosts*, *demons*, and *saints.* For a full account of all the occasions on which demon occurs in the New Testament, see below, sect. x.

But they could not assign the word a different meaning on this subject, without running counter to the sense of all mankind in their age. For, whatever was then taught concerning other evil spirits; yet both Jews and Gentiles were agreed in referring possessions to the spirits of departed men. Not a single exception from any contemporary or earlier writer hath hitherto been produced. The evangelists could not be ignorant who possessing demons were universally thought to be, and consequently must know that they would be misunderstood; nay, they must design to be misunderstood by the world, if, without any explanation, they used the word in a sense peculiar to themselves on the subject before us; especially as they were known to use it on other occasions in its common signification.

IV. It is no inconsiderable confirmation of all that hath been offered concerning possessing demons, that the primitive Christians understood hereby human spirits, and represent this as the general opinion of the world. None could be better qualified to inform us of the general sense of those ages, concerning the subject under our consideration, than *Justin Martyr*. He was born in Palestine, bred a heathen, and instructed in the principles of the Stoic, Peripatetic, Pythagorean, and Platonic philosophy. He afterwards became a Christian, and flourished near the times of the apostles. Now this learned writer (without the least apprehension of contradicting Christ or his apostles) says expressly, that *those persons who are seized and thrown down by the souls of the deceased, are*

are such as ALL MEN *agree in calling demoniacs and mad**. And he himself agreed with the rest of the world, in referring possessions to the souls of dead men; for, from the case of the possessed, he infers the permanency of the human soul after death. It is more remarkable, that he should esteem the *possessing* demons to be human souls, and affirm that *all men* did so too; inasmuch as he seems to have believed in demons of a different order from those who were of the human species †. Other

* Οἱ ψυχὰς ἀποθανόντων λαμβάνοντες, καὶ μαινομένους ἀνθρώπους, οὓς δαιμονιολήπτους καὶ μαινομένους καλοῦσι πάντες. Apol. i. al. ii. p. 65. Paris. 1620. p. 54. ed. Bened. p. 27. ed. Thirlb.

† In his Cohort. ad Græcos, p. 87. ed. Oxon. he calls the devil a demon, and (p. 19.) speaks of the devil's deceiving our first parents.

To some it may appear strange, that possessions should be ascribed by many of the Fathers, after the time of Justin Martyr, to fallen angels. The following considerations, perhaps, may in some measure account for their conduct:

I. Several philosophers taught, that the heathen demons were evil spirits of a rank superior to mankind; and that these demons personated the souls of the dead, gods, and genii, and procured themselves to be worshipped under their names. See Plutarch. de Is. et Osir. p. 360, 361. Porphyry de Abstin. § 36, 37, 39, 40, 42. Philo de Gigantibus, p. 286. C. ed. Paris. Jamblichus de Mysteriis, segm. iii. c. 31, 32. Dissertation on Miracles, p. 220, note r, 8vo, or p. 140, 12mo. Now, in this opinion many of the Fathers had been educated; others were inclined to adopt it, from an attachment to the principles of some of the learned Gentiles. Accordingly we find them, in support of this opinion, appealing to the magi, and to the philosophers. Isti igitur impuri spiritus, dæmones, ut ostensum à magis, à philosophis, et à Platone, says Minucius Felix in the person of Octavius, c. 27. vid. c. 26. He describes them as, à cœlesti vigore terrenis labibus et cupiditatibus degravati. The Fathers ascribed to these celestial demons whatever the heathens in general attributed to their deified ghosts; and consequently

Other testimonies might be produced, but, I hope, they are not wanted; especially as the evidence is all on

sequently accounted for possessions, without referring them to human spirits. This was natural and unavoidable, if you suppose them to be seriously persuaded of the truth of what had been taught them on this subject by their pagan instructors.

II. Motives of policy, as well as the principles of their education, and their attachment to the Gentile philosophy, led them to represent possessing demons as spirits of a higher order than mankind. In order to understand this matter, it will be necessary to transcribe a few passages from St. Chrysostom; and I shall the rather do it, as they will serve to illustrate the general argument, as well as to establish the point for which they are more directly produced. Ενταυθα ποικιλον νοσημα της ὑμετερας εξελειν βουλομαι ψυχας· και γαρ πολλοι των αφελεστερων νομιζουσι τας ψυχας των βιαιω θανατω τελευτωντων δαιμονας γινεσθαι. Ουκ εστι δε τουτο, ουκ εστιν. Ου γαρ αι ψυχαι των βιαθανατουντων δαιμονες γινονται, αλλ' αι ψυχαι των εν ἁμαρτημασι ζοντων. Hic malum morbum vestræ animæ eximere cupio: etenim multi simpliciores existimant, animas eorum, qui violenta morte decesserunt, fieri dæmonas. Hoc vero non est, non est. Non enim animæ eorum, qui violenta morte decedunt, fiunt dæmones, sed animæ eorum qui in peccatis vivunt. De Lazaro, Conc. II. tom. i. p. 727. ed. Montfaucon. St. Chrysostom admits that the demons in the possessed persons pretended that they were the souls of such or such a monk; (αι δαιμονες λεγουσι, του μοναχου του δεινος ἡ ψυχη εισι, p. 722.) which was one of the arguments used to prove the truth of the commonly received doctrine, that the possessing demons were human spirits. But Chrysostom himself asserts, that it was the devil that personated the ghosts of those who suffered *a violent death*, and hereby caused men to think they became demons, that he might destroy the honour of the martyrs, του των μαρτυρων επιχειρησε διαφθειραι δοξαν. Ibid. In the same place he assigns a farther reason of the devil's conduct in this respect, viz. its prompting magicians to kill a great number of youths, in hopes of their becoming demons, and affording them assistance in their enterprizes. Ελπιδι του δαιμονας εστασθαι, και παλιν αυτοις υπηρετειν.

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on one side. No single instance of a person's being said to be possessed by apostate angels, or by any other

In another part of his works, (in Matth. Hom. lxviii. al. lxix. tom. vii. p. 336.) St. Chrysostom argues at large against the opinion of the souls of the deceased becoming demons. *Why did the Gadarene demons lodge in the tombs?* He answers, αλεθριον δογμα τοις πολλοις ενδεινα βυλομενον· οιον ότι αι ψυχαι των απολωλοτων δαιμονες γινονται. Ut perniciosam doctrinam multorum mentibus insererant, nempe animas mortuorum dæmonas fieri. He supposes, some would object, "If the souls of the dead are not converted into demons, why do magicians kill boys with a view to their assistance? and why do demoniacs cry out, *I am the soul of such a person?*" οι δαιμονιζομενοι βοωσιν, ότι ψυχη τινος εγω. He solves these objections here, as in the before-cited place, by supposing the devil spoke in the demoniacs, in order to persuade men that human souls only become demons.

From the foregoing passages it appears, that even so late as the time of Chrysostom, who lived to the beginning of the fifth century, it was still a prevailing opinion, as well amongst Christians as Heathens, that the demons who were thought to possess mankind were considered as the souls of the deceased, particularly such as suffered a violent death, (see Dissertation on Miracles, p. 209, 8vo, or p. 133, 12mo.) Nay, St. Chrysostom himself, at the very time that he is opposing the notion of the souls of those who suffered a violent death becoming demons, asserts that the souls of wicked men became such. And I question whether the doctrine he rejects, did not maintain its ground as long as the general belief of possessions did. In the year 1564, Hieronymus Magius says; Ego quoque dæmoniacos non paucos vidi, in quibus immundi spiritus, dum a sacerdote adjurentur, se interfectorum quorundam animas esse *mentirentur*. Variar. Lectionum, lib. iv. c. 12. The primitive Fathers boasted, that no devil dared to lie to a Christian, (Dissertation on Miracles, p. 217, 8vo, or p. 138, 12mo; but in the age of Magius, it seems, devils grew more audacious, and would lie even when adjured by a priest.

It also appears from the foregoing passages of Chrysostom, how little stress is to be laid upon the opposition which he and other

other than human spirits, hath hitherto been pointed out in any writer who lived either before or near the time of Christ. Now, whether, when the meaning of an antient word is in question, we should be determined by those very antients, with whom it was in common use; or by the mere assertions of the moderns,

Fathers made to the common doctrine concerning possessing demons: an opposition that may be accounted for, not only by their undue reverence of the Pagan philosophers, but by those motives of policy which had too great an influence upon their general conduct. Indeed, the Fathers do so often speak from these motives alone (as all must allow), that it is sometimes difficult to determine when they speak agreeably to their own inward persuasion. St. Jerome (ep. 50. ad Pammach.) gives the following very just account of them: Quia interdum coguntur loqui, non quod sentiunt, sed quod necesse est, dicunt adversus ea quæ dicunt Gentiles. Whenever they have an end to serve, no caution can be too great in following them. In the case before us they had many ends to serve. If every one who suffered a violent death became a demon in their sense of the word, that is, a mischievous spirit; how was it possible to save the credit of the Christian martyrs? Besides, what could contribute more to bring Paganism into disgrace, than to represent its gods as devils, who personated these gods, and passed under their names? This view of the Pagan gods served also to disparage the prophecies and miracles ascribed to them by their worshippers, and the reality of which was too hastily allowed by the Fathers. Æsculapius, the god of the Cilicians, for example, was believed by his worshippers to appear to those who slept in his temple, and to perform many cures. Now Eusebius (Vit. Constantini, lib. iii. c. 56.) admits the facts, and ascribes them, not to him whom the Cilicians worshipped as a demon or deity, but to a fraudulent spirit. See below, sect. x. He ought to have demanded proof of the facts, but he well knew there was danger in doing this, because they stood upon the very same foundation as the miracles ascribed to deified saints.

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derns, who have no other way to support a favourite hypothesis than by running counter to all antiquity; let the reader judge.

The foregoing observations concerning demons may enable us to understand what is meant by a *spirit of divination**, (or, as it is in the original, a

It is of no importance to determine whether the Fathers were sincere or not, in opposing the general sense of mankind, by ascribing possessions to fallen angels rather than to human spirits. If you suppose this to be their real opinion, you are to remember, that it was built not upon the authority of Moses and the prophets, or of Christ and his apostles, but upon that of the Gentile philosophers. If you allow that they did not really entertain this opinion, your deference to them, however great, cannot engage you to accede to it. The Fathers well knew that the heathen gods were deified human ghosts; as is shewn in Dissertation on Miracles, p. 212, 8vo, or p. 135, 12mo. They likewise knew that these ghosts were by the heathens styled demons, (which confirms what was advanced on this subject above.) Δαιμονας μεν τας τετελευτηκυιας καλουντες, dæmonas quidem eorum animas vocantes. Clem. Alexan. Strom. lib. vi. p. 775. ed. Potteri. Minucius Felix, (in his Octavius, c. 29.) speaking of their deifying kings, says, Sic eorum numen vocant, ad imagines supplicant, genium, id est, dæmonem ejus implorant. See also Athenagoras in Legat. prò Christianis, p. 29. And though sometimes, in order to account for possessions and other pagan miracles, they introduce demons of a higher class; yet they often intimate that paganism had no other support than human fraud and imposture. See Dissertation on Miracles, p. 241, 8vo, or p. 153, 12mo. From the passages cited above, in the Introduction, p. 5. note*, it appears that they themselves doubted or disbelieved the reality of possessions, though they asserted it in their popular discourses. I have no desire of detracting from the just merit of these writers; and mean only to shew those who lay too great stress on their authority, how little deference is due to it in the case before us.

* Act. xvi. 16. 18.

*spirit of Python, or Apollo**,) with which the damsel at Philippi was thought to be possessed. Amongst many other sorts of diviners in the Pagan world, there was one which were thought to be possessed with prophesying dæmons†. Besides other‡ names that were given them, they were often called *Pythons*§, from *Apollo Pythius*‖, one of the chief of all the prophesying demons, whose priestess at the famous temple at Delphi was from him called *Pythia*. He himself was the son of Jupiter and Latona, and born in the isle of Delos. It was with the spirit of this dead man that the damsel at Philippi was thought to be inspired. St. Luke, without allowing her pretensions, (as we have shewn elsewhere¶,) describes them in the language of the Pagans; which, without doubt, he uses in the same sense as they did, especially as he gives no notice to the contrary; and, consequently, he cannot here refer to any other than a human spirit.

* Πνευμα Πυθωνος.

† Potter's Greek Antiquities, vol. i. ch. 12. p. 268. See also ch. 9. p. 241. 246.

‡ Such as δαιμονολυπτοι, εγγαστριμαντεις, &c.

§ Πυθωνες. Plutarch. de Orac. defec. p. 414. E.

‖ Or, from Python, a famous Byzantine ventriloquist. See Hesych. Lexicon, and Vandale De divinat. Idol. sub Vet. Test. p. 650. This last writer has well refuted that strange but too common opinion, that by a spirit of Python St. Luke meant the devil. Compare Le Clerc's Supplement to Hammond, on Act. xvi. 16.

¶ Dissertation on Miracles, p. 275, 8vo, or 175, 12mo.

SECTION

SECTION III.

Prop. III. *Those demons who were thought to take possession of men's bodies, were, it is probable, considered by the Jews as evil beings.*

THE word, indeed, is in itself indifferent, and was, in the age of the Gospel, very commonly applied both to good and bad demons*. In the New Testament it doth not occur always in a bad sense†: but it sometimes doth. St. James saith, *The devils (demons) believe and tremble*‡. To suppose with Dr. Sykes, that *good* spirits are here spoken of, doth not agree with the apostle's reasoning in this place. St. Paul's argument likewise, in his first epistle to the Corinthians §, is generally thought to proceed on the supposition, that the demons worshipped by the heathens were *wicked* spirits: a supposition very agreeable to the *characters* ascribed to them, and the *immorality* of the worship paid them by their own votaries. Josephus declares, that demoniacs were possessed by the

* Philo de Gigantibus, p. 286, cited in Dissertation on Miracles, p. 207, 208, 8vo, or 131, 12mo.

† In Act. xvii. 18. 1 Tim. iv. 1. Rev. ix. 20. it is applied to the souls of such men as were deified or canonized after death. Dissertation on Miracles, p. 167. 203, 204, 8vo, or 105. 129, 12mo.

‡ Chap. ii. 19. The word used by St. James is δαιμονια; but δαιμονια and δαιμονες occur in Scripture as synonymous terms. Compare Matt. viii. 31. Luke viii. 27. 29. Δαιμονιωδης cannot be taken in a good sense, Jam. iii. 15.

§ 1 Cor. x. 20, 21. Compare 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15, 16.

spirits of wicked men*. By such spirits, demoniacs amongst the heathens (after whom the Jews copied) were thought to be possessed†. And it was plainly with a view of discrediting the mission, and blasting the character of Christ, that the Pharisees reproached him as a confederate with the prince of demons.

Some of the epithets given by the evangelists to the spirits ejected by Christ, seem rather best to agree with the supposition of their being of an immoral nature; for they are called *evil*‡ and *unclean* §. It is not how-

* Bell. Jud. lib. vii. c. 6. § 3, cited above, p. 25. In his history of Saul (Antiq. lib. vi. c. 8. § 2. and c. 11. § 2.) and Solomon, (Antiq. lib. viii. c. 2. § 5.) δαιμονια must be taken in a bad sense. He expressly represents Saul, as seized upon by *an evil spirit and demons*, πονηρου πνευματος, και των δαιμονιων, Antiq. lib. vi. c. 11. § 2. Nevertheless, the adjective δαιμονιος must be understood differently in this author, and as equivalent to *divine*. It is joined with *providence*, Antiq. lib. xiii. c. 11. § 3. Bell. Jud. lib. vii. c. 8. § 5. Ode, in his Commentar. de Angelis, p. 202. has observed, that δαιμονιον τερας is *a divine prodigy*. Bell. Jud. lib. i. c. 17. βοηθεια δαιμονιος, *divine assistance*, lib. iv. c. 3. § 14. δαιμονιος φθορα, *a destruction from God*, lib. vi. c. 9. § 4. and συμφορα δαιμονιος, *a calamity sent from God*, lib. i. c. 19. § 3. Other examples of this use of δαιμονιος are produced by Ode. See also Philostrat. de Vit. Apollon. Tyan. lib. i. c. 2. p. 4. (ed. Olear. Lips. 1709.) where δαιμονιος is used, as equivalent to θειος.

† Concerning the Larvati amongst the Latins, see above, p. 16, note §. In the eastern languages, all the words which answer to demons are said to be taken in an ill sense.

‡ Luke vii. 21. ch. viii. 2.

§ Matt. x. 1. Mark i. 23. ch. v. 2. 8. 13. Luke iv. 33. 36. Acts v. 16. ch. viii. 7. Mr. Mede is of opinion that St. Luke knew the word demon to be *ambiguous*, and therefore, to distinguish it once for all, doth, the first time he uses it, do it with an explication: *There was a man in the synagogue having the spirit* (δαιμονιου ακαθαρτου) *of an unclean demon*. Works, p. 686.

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ever certain; whether these epithets were given them to express their *personal dispositions*, or only those *effects* they were supposed to produce. The word *evil** might be applied to a demon, on account of the *pain* and *misery* he was thought to create. And it is possible that demons might be called *unclean*, because persons under that melancholy and maniacal disorder, of which they were the reputed authors, avoided the society of men, and were continually defiling themselves with objects esteemed by the Jews unclean. This was the case of the man who lived amongst the tombs†; by which he contracted the greatest pollution. Demons are called *dumb*‡ *spirits*, and *deaf*§ and *dumb* spirits. Were these demons thought to be themselves deaf and dumb? or only to make men so?

* Πονηρος signifies infelix or miser, as well as improbus or malus. The κακος δαιμων in Homer may denote an *adverse*, and not a *wicked*, demon, and be equivalent to στυγερος δαιμων, Odyss. lib. v. ver. 396. Compare the passage from Plutarch. de Orac. defect. p. 438, cited below.

† See Beausobre and Lenfant on Matt. x. 1. In Zechariah xiii. 2. God promises *to cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.* Here, as these learned writers observe, the spirit of the false prophets is called *unclean*, because these prophets or necromancers were supposed to receive their inspiration at sepulchres. I add, that it appears from the Talmud, that the Jews, when they were corrupted by the superstition of the heathens, resorted to sepulchres, where the souls of the departed were thought to remain, that *an unclean spirit* might descend upon them. The demons themselves, it was imagined, delighted in desolate places. Rev. xviii. 2. Compare Lightfoot's Hor. Hebraic. on Luke xiii. 11. Works, vol. ii. p. 442.

‡ Mark ix. 17. *I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit.*

§ *Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee come out of him*, ver. 25.

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Would not the latter opinion be a sufficient reason for giving them these titles?

In the controversy concerning the gospel demoniacs, between Dr. Sykes and his opponents, it seemed to be taken for granted by both parties, that if demons were *evil* spirits, they must of necessity be *fallen angels*. But if we allow that demons were considered as evil spirits, it will by no means follow that they were regarded as beings originally of a higher order than mankind; as we have elsewhere shewn*. The Fathers of the church generally understood demon in an ill sense, and thought it was to be so taken in the Scriptures†.

SECTION IV.

Prop. IV. *Those persons who are spoken of as having demons, suffered real and very violent disorders, from whatever causes these disorders proceeded.*

WHETHER reputed demoniacs were possessed by demons or not, they are ranked in the New Testament amongst those who suffered the most grievous distempers. St. Mathew‡ having said in general terms, *They brought to Jesus all sick people that were taken with* DIVERS *diseases and torments;* then specifies the following

* Dissertation on Miracles, p. 204, 8vo, or p. 130, 12mo.

† St. Austin de Civ. Dei, lib. ix. c. 19. Tertullian as cited there, i. e. Dissertation on Miracles, p. 548, 8vo, or 351, 12mo. Origen contra Cels. p. 234. Euseb. Præp. Evang lib. iv. c. 5.

‡ Ch. iv. 24. Παντας τους κακως εχοντας, ποικιλαις νοσοις και βασανοις συνεχομενους, και δαιμονιζομενους, και σεληνιαζομενους, και παραλυτικους.

particular

particular cases; *even those who were possessed with demons, and those who were lunatic, and those who had the palsy*. Here possessed persons, lunatics, and paralytics, though contra-distinguished from each other, are all equally comprehended under *the sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments*. On another occasion, the same evangelist says, *They brought unto him many that were possessed with demons: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses**. This prophecy concerning Christ's *taking our infirmities, and bearing our sicknesses*, was accomplished in part by the cure of demoniacs; and therefore possessions are comprehended under *infirmities* and *sicknesses*†, and consequently imply some disorder or distemper in the human frame, from whatever cause it might proceed.

The miracle wrought upon the demoniacs is often described in the same terms as that wrought upon the diseased; terms that necessarily imply their having previously laboured under a real distemper. St. Matthew says equally concerning demoniacs, lunatics, and paralytics, *He* HEALED *them*‡. The same historian describes the cure of the daughter of a woman of Canaan, *who was grievously vexed with a*

* Matt. viii. 16, 17. Isa. liii. 4.

† Τας ασθενειας, και τας νοσους. Had not possessions been included under diseases, the mention of them would not have been omitted, Matt. xi. 5. See below, sect. x.

‡ Εθεραπευσεν αυτον, Matt. iv. 24.

demon,

demon, by saying that *she was* MADE WHOLE*. *A great multitude of people*, says St. Luke, *came to be healed of their diseases; and they that were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed*†. At another time he tells us *that Christ* CURED *many of their infirmities, and plagues, and evil spirits*‡. In describing the miracle wrought upon demoniacs, the evangelists say indifferently, Christ expelled the demon, or, that he healed the demoniac §. From hence it appears, that a real disorder was cured, whenever Christ is represented as ejecting a demon. Amongst the Greeks and Romans, also, as well as amongst the Jews, those persons who were thought to be possessed suffered grievous distempers. This will appear with the fullest evidence in the two following sections, where we are particularly to explain the nature of those distempers which were imputed to possessions. All that we mean here to affirm, is, that demoniacs were afflicted with certain distempers, whether the possession of demons was the real, or only the reputed cause of them. It was indeed from the well-known appearances and

* Ιαθη, Matt. xv. 28.

† Εθεραπευοντο, Luke vi. 18.

‡ Εθεραπευσε πολλους απο νοσων και μαστιγων και πνευματων πονηρων. Luke vii. 21. In ch. viii. 2. we read of *certain women which had been healed of evil spirits*. See also Act. v. 16.

§ Concerning the epileptic youth, it is said, *Thy disciples could not* (θεραπευσαι) *cure him*, Matt. xvii. 16. *The demon departed out of him; and the child was cured* (εθεραπευθη) *from that very hour*, v. 18. In Luke ix. 42, it is said, *Jesus healed the child*. See also Matt. viii. 16, 17. just now cited, where Christ's *bearing away our sicknesses* includes the cure of possessions, as well as of other diseases.

symptoms

symptoms of certain diseases, that the antients inferred that the patients were possessed.

SECTION V.

Prop. v. *The particular disorders which the antients, whether heathens or Jews, ascribed to the possession of demons, were such only as disturbed the understanding.*

To prepare the way for the proof of this proposition, it is necessary to observe that we are carefully to distinguish, though the distinction hath not been attended to, between diseases supernaturally *inflicted*, and *possessions*. The antient Heathens attributed diseases, not only those attended with extraordinary symptoms, (as Dr. Sykes* apprehended,) but diseases in general, to the anger of the immortal gods†; and accordingly from them sought for relief‡. Sick persons advised with their priests and prophets, as we now do with our physicians; and expected to be restored to health by lustrations and charms, without the use of natural remedies, except such as were suggested by the gods. They did not, however, represent all persons whom the gods or demons visited with diseases, as having those gods or demons *within them*, which was supposed to be the case with all demoniacs.

* Inquiry, p. 6.

† Morbos tum ad iram deorum immortalium relatos esse, et ab iisdem opem posci solitam. Celsus, lib. i. præfat.

‡ See Young on Idolatry, vol. ii. p. 85.

When

When they became such, the demon was thought to *enter* them; and at his *leaving* them, or being *expelled* from them, they no longer came under this denomination*. While he remained in them, they spoke

* In the evangelical history we read, that "the demons (ἐξελθόντες ἀπηλθον εις των χοιρων) *came out* of the men, and *went into* the herd of swine." Matt. viii. 32. Compare Mark i. 26. Indeed the expression of *casting out* demons, which so often occurs in the New Testament, shews, that the popular opinion was, that they had been *in* the demoniacs. Agreeably to this opinion, the Gadarene demoniacs, conceiving of themselves as the mere organs of indwelling demons, say to Christ, *If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine:* (ει εκβαλλεις ἡμας, επιτρεψον ἡμιν απελθειν εις την αγελην των χοιρων), Matt. viii. 31. On other occasions, the demons are represented as speaking in the possessed.

The learned and ingenious Semlerus asserts, ex verbis illis, ἐξελθον, εξηρχετο δαιμονια, non conficitur, dæmonia esse in homine ὑφεσταμενα. And he assigns as the ground of his assertion, that a similar phrase occurs with respect to the leprosy, ἡ λεπρα απηλθεν, Mark i. 42. Luke v. 13. p. 36, 37, 38. In p. 45, note 30, he says, Cypriani inveni primam illam truculentam phrasin, *de obsessorum corporibus ejiciuntur*; *de obsessis corporibus exire* coguntur.—Illud εκβαλλειν, ejicere, induxit interpretes, non vero refertur ad corpus ipsum hominis. Indeed, through the whole of his tract, he seems more inclined to dispute the personal presence of demons in the human body, than their power of afflicting it with uncommon diseases. And in the passage here cited, he seems willing to assign the notion of proper possessions, so late a date as the age of Cyprian.

It appears however from the earliest writers, that demoniacs were supposed to have demons within them in person. Semlerus himself says, p. 8, note 6, *In corpus* intrat dæmon fatidicus; and, in proof of this assertion, very properly appeals to Eurip. Bacch. v. 300. Ὁταν γαρ ὁ θεος ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΣΩΜ' ΕΛΘΗ πολυς; and also to Virgil, Æn. vi. 77, &c.

At Phœbi nondum patiens, immanis in antro
Bacchatur vates, magnum *si pectore* possit
Excussisse deum.

Aristotle

spoke and acted under his influence, without having (as we shall shew in the sequel) the use of their own understandings. Now this cannot be affirmed concerning all those whom the gods, by a transient act of power,

Aristotle (de Mirab. Auscult. extrem.) speaking of a stone in the river Nile, expresses himself in the following manner: συντελει δε και τους δαιμονα την γινομενην κατοχην [Thrasyllus et Plutarchus ποιει δε αριστα προς τους δαιμονιζομενους] αμα γαρ τω προστιθεναι ταις ρισιν ΑΠΕΡΧΕΤΑΙ [Thrasyllus ΕΞΕΡΧΕΤΑΙ] το δαιμονιον. Vide Thrasyll. apud Stobæum XCVIII. et Plutarch. de Fluviis, p. 1159. Josephus, in the passage cited from him above, p. 25. represents the demons as *entering* those called demoniacs; and immediately after adds, that the root baaras *drives away* (εξελαυνει) demons. Elsewhere he affirms, that Solomon instructed men in the art of curing these unhappy persons, which was, by extracting the demon through the nostrils: εξελκειν αναφρινομενω δια των μυκτηρων το δαιμονιον. This is said of Eleazar, who at the same time commanded the demon, as he *went out* of the patient, εξιοντι τω ανθρωπω, to overturn a cup of water; and adjured him not to *return into him again*, μηκετ' εις αυτον επανελθειν. Antiq. Jud. lib. viii. c. 2. § 5. Once more, Lucian in his Philopseudes, (p. 337. tom. ii. ed. Amstelodami) where he is describing the commonly received opinion on this subject, says, Επειδαν γαρ επιστη κειμενοις, και ερηται ὁθεν ΕΙΣΕΛΗΛΥΘΑΣΙΝ ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΣΩΜΑ,—ὁ δαιμων απορειται,—ὁπως τι, και ὁθεν ΕΠΗΛΘΕΝ ΕΞ ΤΟΝ ΑΝΤΡΩΠΟΝ. Etenim quum jacentibus supervenit, rogavitque unde *in corpus ingressi sint*,—dæmon respondet,—quomodo et unde *in hominem intravit*. Immediately after he represents the exorcist as *driving away* or *expelling* the demon, εξελαυνει τον δαιμονα.

These passages, and a thousand others that might be produced from writers who lived several ages before Cyprian, serve to shew, that the general idea which the antients entertained of demoniacs, was that of persons whose symptoms were ascribed to the real presence and residence of demons in the human body. The objection of Semlerus, taken notice of above, however ingenious, doth not appear to have any force: for though a *disease* as well as a *demon* is said to *depart* from a man; yet this language will not prove that the demon was not in him before, but rather implies the contrary, just as the disease

power, were supposed to chastise with mere bodily disorders. Apollo, according to Homer*, sent the plague upon the Grecian army; but those who were visited by the plague do not answer to the descriptions of demoniacs, nor were they ever represented as such.

In like manner, with respect to the Jews, St. Peter, speaking in the language of his country, says, *Christ healed all that were oppressed of the devil*†. The apostle seems here to refer to Christ's cure of the diseased in general, without taking into consideration the particular case of the demoniacs; who, in the gospels, are distinguished ‡ from the blind, the lame, the paralytic, and those afflicted with other maladies; concerning whom we never read that demons *entered* them, or were *expelled* from them. The leprosy was considered by the Jews as a divine infliction §. And indeed, as a very eminent writer observes ‖, all over

disease was in the man, from whom it was said to depart. It is for want of attending to the proper idea the antients had of possessions, that even the best writers on the subject confound it with every grievous distemper that was ascribed to the anger of the gods.

* Il. 1. The antients were generally of opinion, that pestilence proceeded from the anger of the gods. Diogen. Laërt. lib. viii. segm. 70.

† Act. x. 38. Though Dr. Sykes (Farther Inquiry, p. 59.) refers this passage to Christ's recovering men from the power of the devil, to obedience to God; it is nevertheless evident, that St. Peter is here shewing, that Christ's divine commission was demonstrated by his *miracles*. The expression is equivalent to Matt. iv. 23. *He healed all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease amongst the people.* All the diseased were spoken of by the Jews, as *oppressed by an evil spirit*, but not as *possessed by demons*, of whom there is here no mention.

‡ See below, ch. ii. sect. 3. at the beginning.

§ See Hammond on Matt. viii. 4.

‖ Michaelis, in his Dissertation on the Influence of Opinions on Languages, p. 6.

the East, where the leprosy is almost incurable, it was regarded in the same light. The same celebrated author farther takes notice, "that according to Herodotus*, it was the belief of the Persians, that the leprosy came no other way than as a punishment for having offended the sun." He adds, "From hence (that is, from its being regarded as a punishment of God's own immediate inflicting) it is, that the most usual word for the leprosy, amongst the Hebrews, properly signifies a *stroke or lash with a whip.*" Nevertheless, lepers are never spoken of *as possessed by demons.*

Once more, our Saviour, speaking of the woman who was bowed together, and was unable to stand upright, describes her as one *whom Satan hath bound*†. It was customary with the Jews, according to Lightfoot‡, *to attribute some of the more grievous diseases to evil spirits, especially those wherein either the body was distorted, or the mind disturbed.* From hence it follows, that supposing this woman's disorder to be the palsy, or a total relaxation of the nerves, and that it proceeded from natural causes; yet the Jews would express the case by saying, *Satan bound her.* And it is possible that our Saviour, when speaking on subjects of natural knowledge, might see fit to adopt the language of the age and country in which he lived§.

* Clio, c. 138.

† Luke xiii. 11. 16.

‡ On Matt. xvii. 15.

§ See below, ch. ii. sect. 3. No. I. II.

The

The term satan, indeed, is sometimes applied to a *good* angel, acting in opposition to any one; as was shewn above. If you thus understand it here, the meaning will be, that this affliction befel her by the providence of God. But whatever be intended by satan*, by whom this woman is said to be bound, it is certain, the Gospel doth not represent her as a demoniac. She is, indeed, spoken of as having *a spirit of infirmity*; but this is manifestly a description, not of any *demon*, but of her *disorder*, which was that of an *infirm disposition and habit*; for she was not able to lift up herself. And if the expression denotes an infirmity *inflicted* by an evil spirit, still this is very different from *being possessed*. None come under this description, as I shall now attempt to shew, but such as were disordered in their senses and understandings, or wanted the right use of their faculties.

Amongst the *Latins*†, all the words which describe demoniacs, or persons possessed by ghosts, include in them the idea of madness, or an alienation of mind.

* It was observed above, p. 11. that satan denotes *an adversary*, and Dr. Sykes supposes that the term might be applied to the woman's *infirmity*, or whatever was the obstruction to her health. Inquiry, p. 54. But the citation from Lightfoot seems to afford the best help towards understandiug this passage.

† See above, p. 15. As to the Lymphatici, we read in Pliny, (Nat. Hist. lib. viii. § 71.) Hi greges repente lymphati futura præcinunt. The Lymphatici are the νυμφολήπτοι of the Greeks, concerning whom Aristotle (lib. i. Ethicor. Epidem.) says, τους νυμφολήπτους; ενιους δαιμονια ενθουσιαζειν. Lymphans signifies, making one mad: It, lymphante deo, vociferans. Stat. Thebaid. vii. 662.

Their

Their *Larvati** and *Cerriti*† in particular, who answer exactly to *the possessed with demons* in the New Testament, were all madmen. *To be full of larvæ*‡, or the ghosts of wicked men, was a phrase expressive of the most outrageous madness.

In like manner amongst the *Greeks*, rage and phrensy were the usual attendants of inspiration and possession§; and the same word denoted both the *being*

* The Larvati are described by Festus, as furiosi, et mente moti, quasi larvis exterriti. In Plautus (Captiv. act. iii. sc. 4. v. 65.) it is said of Aristophontes, Jam deliramenta loquitur: larvæ stimulant virum. Vid. Aulular. act. iv. sc. 5. v. 15. Larvæ hunc, atque intemperiæ, insaniæque agitant virum.

† Hellade percussâ, Marius cùm præcipitat se
Cerritus fuit?
Hor. Sat. lib. ii. sat. 3. v. 278.

‡ Larvarum plenu. Plaut. Amphitruo, act. ii. sc. 2. v. 144. See Dr. Sykes's Inquiry, p. 17.

§ Ἡμιν δε καταγελατε, ω Σκυθαι, ὁτι βακχευομεν, και ημας ὁ θεος λαμβανει· τυν ἑυτος ὁ δαιμων ἡ των ὑμετερων βασιλεα λελαβηκε, ἡ βακχευει, και ὑπο του θεου μαινεται. Herodotus, lib. iv. c. 79. The heathen prophets, who are always represented as possessed by their deities, were beside themselves. Νυν δε τα μεγιστα των αγαθων ἡμιν γιγνεται δια μανιας, θεια μεντοι δοσει δοθεισα· ἡ τε γαρ δη εν Δελφοις προφητις, αι τ' εν Δοδωνη ἱερειαι, μανεισαι μεν πολλα δη και καλα, ἱδια τε και δημοσια την Ἑλλαδα εἰργασαντο. Plato's Phædrus, inter Oper. tom. iii. p. 224. ed. Serrani. In his Timæus, tom. iii. p. 71. it is asserted, ουδεις γαρ ἐνθους εφαπτεται μαντικης ενθεου και αληθους. The manner in which Dio Chrysostom describes the case of a priestess of Hercules, confirms the general proposition of Plato: Ταυτα και ελεγεν ουχ' ὡσπερ οἱ πολλοι των λεγομενων ενθεων ανδρων και γυναικων, ασθμαινουσα και περιδινουμενη την κεφαλην και πειρωμενη δεινον ἐμβλεπειν, αλλα παυ εγκρατως και σωφρονως. De Regno, Orat. i. p. 11, 12. ed Casauboni. Euripides (in his Bacchæ, v. 298.) thus expresses the sentiments of the Heathens on the subject before us:

To

being mad and *having a demon**. The highest degrees of rage and distraction are expressed by a term borrowed from *evil demons*†. Nay, possession by demons,

——————Το γαρ βακχευτιμον,
Και το μανιωδες, μαντικην πολλην εχει.
Οταν γαρ ὁ Θεος εις το σωμ' ελθη πολυς,
Λεγειν το μελλον τους μεμηνοτας ποιει.

——————Etenim ipsa bacchatio,
Et ipsa insania magnam vaticinandi vim habet:
Quando enim hic deus in corpus venerit multus,
Dicere futura insanientes facit.

Compare Plutarch de Orac. defect. p. 432. F. where this passage is cited. See also p. 438. A. B. and above, p. 13, note †.

* What the New Testament expresses by δαιμονιον εχειν, and δαιμονιζεσθαι, is in other Greek authors expressed (more commonly at least) by δαιμονᾶν, which according to Suidas (in voc.) signifies ὑπο δαιμονος κατεχεσθαι, και μαινεσθαι, a dæmone possideri, insanire. This word occurs twice in Xenophon's Memor. Socrat. lib. i. cap. 1. § 9. δαιμονᾶν εφη, furere dicebat. Δαιμονᾶν δε και τους κ. τ. λ. itidem illos etiam aiebat furere. In the same sense it is used in Heliodorus, lib. iv. cap. 10, ἡ παις δαιμονᾶν εοικε, οὑτως αλλοκοτον τι το κατ' αυτην: filiam larvæ stimulare videntur, adeo inusitatum quiddam illi accidit. The same author adds, δαιμονᾶν την κορην, furias stimulare puellam. Lucian calls demoniacs under great terrors, τους δαιμονωντας, and describes them, as *lunatic*, καταπεπηγοτας προς την σελην, as staring with their eyes, foaming at the mouth, and being speechless. Philopseud. p. 337. ed. Amstelodam. p. 883. ed. Par. Suidas hath produced a passage (from Collectan. Constantini Imperatoris, a Valesio editis, p. 145.) in which δαιμονησας denotes insania correptus. In the Phœnissæ of Euripides, v. 895. δαιμονωντας is used to describe those who were beside themselves.

† Lambert Bos (in his Exercit. Philolog. p. 62.) observes, Κακοδαιμονᾶν est apud Aristophan. in Pluto, act. ii. sc. 3. v. 364. 366. 372.) ubi Blepsidemum ter separatis vicibus insectatur Chremylus, dicens, Ουχ ὑγιαινειν μοι δοκεις, Non tu sat mihi sanus videre. Μελαγχολᾶς atra te

demons, or by evil demons, is often used by them to express madness, whether this disorder proceeded from demons or not*.

The

te bilis agitat. Κακοδαιμονᾶς, larvæ te atque intemperiæ agitant. Ex quo loco cernere licet, tria illa insaniam insinuere, at postremum hoc κακοδαιμονᾶν, gravissimam insaniæ speciem, extremam sc. dementiam, furorem vehementissimum, cujus auctor credebatur esse κακοδαίμων. In act. ii. sc. 5. v. 501. μανια et κακοδαιμονια are thus distinguished, Τις αν ουχ ἡγοιτ' εἰναι μανιαν, κακοδαιμονιαν τ' ὁτι μαλλον; Quis non reputabit esse insaniam, imo potiùs extremum furorem?

* This appears from the passages from Xenophon cited above, note *, p. 48, where δαιμονᾶν merely expresses insanity, without any reference to the cause. The same observation holds true with regard to the citations from Aristophanes in note †, p. 48, in which *possession by an evil demon* is opposed to τω ἡγιαινειν, and denotes only the highest degree of *melancholy* or *madness*, which are natural disorders. How it came to pass, that the same word which originally denoted both possession and madness, came afterwards to be often used for the latter only, will be shewn in the sequel, chap. i. sect. 6. but especially ch. ii. sect. 3. We are here only concerned to establish the fact: in confirmation of which it may be observed, that in Sophocles (Ajax, v. 242) demon denotes madness, κακα δινα ζων ἡμιαθ', ἁ δαιμων κ' ὠδεις ανδρων ἐδιδαξεν. Mala convicia addens, quæ *furor* illi et nemo hominum subjiciebat. The scholiast observes, δαιμονα δε φησι την μανιαν. The justice of this remark will appear by comparing v. 216. where Ajax is said to be seized with madness, μανια. So that this word seems to be often used, as equivalent to δαιμων. In Æschylus, Theb. v. 1009, we read ἰω δαιμονωντες οι κτα, O furentes in calamitate; and Chœphoræ, v. 564, στειδη δαιμονᾶ δομος κακοις, domus enim ex malis insanit. See also the passage from the Phœnissæ of Euripides, v. 895. cited above, note *, p. 48.

In like manner εὐδαιμων and κακοδαιμων, though originally applied to those who were befriended or opposed by demons, were afterwards used to describe such as were either prosperous and happy on the one hand, or unsuccessful and wretched on the other, to whatever

The like forms of speech were used by the *Jews*, who indeed, on almost all other subjects as well as on this, adopted the phraseology and sentiments of the heathens. When Josephus says that certain Jewish impostors *persuaded the multitude to be possessed by a demon**, he can only mean that these impostors worked up the people into a phrensy, or prevailed upon them to act like madmen. The madness of which the multitude were guilty did not proceed from demoniacal possession, but from human artifice or persuasion. This is a very remarkable passage, because it contains a clear proof that the Jews spoke of persons as being possessed by demons, or as having demons, when they meaned merely to affirm that they were mad. Lightfoot† hath shewn, that the Jews were wont to attribute to evil spirits such diseases as

cause their different conditions were owing. The gods themselves are called *ευδαιμονες*; in the same sense as they are called *μακαρες*; beati. *Λεγε γαρ μοι, ω παντας θεους φης ευδαιμονας ειναι και καλους*; Dic enim mihi, nonne omnes ais deos beatos esse atque bonos? Plato in Sympos. The same epithet is often applied to particular gods, as the reader may see by consulting Ode de Angelis, p. 183. *Κακοδαιμων* denotes *unhappy* or *wretched*, and in this sense occurs continually in exclamations, when persons complain of their misery; (as the same learned writer allows, p. 190.) and on other occasions: particularly in Lucian de Luctu, v. 2. p. 304, *ω κακοδαιμον ανθρωπε*, Homo infelix. Those who brought their misery upon themselves were described by this term: *Τον τε ερωτα κακιαν φησι φυσεως ηττας οντες οι κακοδαιμονες*. Cupidinem vero naturæ vitium appellabat, cui succumbentes miseri. *Τρισευδαιμων* is ter beatus: and *τρισκακοδαιμων* is ter infelix. Ode p. 190.

* *Δαιμονᾶν το πληθος ανεπεισθεν*, Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 13. § 4.

† Hor. Hebr. Matt. xvii. 15. as cited above, p. 45.

disturbed

disturbed the mind; and, what is more to our purpose still, that those vexed with an evil spirit were insane*. They even gave the same name both to demons and diseases, from whatever cause those diseases might proceed. *Kordicus*, say they, *is a demon who rules over those that drink too much new wine; and it is a disease generated from the repletion of the vessels of the brain, whereby the understanding is confounded; and it is a kind of falling sickness* †.

It probably was from the eastern nations that all other people derived their notion of demons: we cannot therefore be surprised to find that the nations bordering upon Judea, as well as those before taken notice of, join insanity and possession together. The Arabic word Gjin, according to Castellus ‡, which signifies a *demon*, signifies madness; and *maginun*, which denotes a person *possessed* by a *demon*, is used for a person furious and insane. With such uniformity did all the antient nations, in their respective languages, express madness by demoniacal possession!

* Compare what the same author hath advanced on Matt. viii. 28. and Luke xiii. 11. and what occurs below at the beginning of the next section with respect to the Jews.

† Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. Matt. xvii. 15. Maimonides in Sabbat. II. 5. (cited by Wetstein, vol. i. p. 283, b.) Spiritum malum vocant omnes species morborum, qui vocantur melancholia. Et in Erubin. iii. 4. Spiritum malum vocant omne damnum, quod non venit a manu hominis, sed alia, quæcunque illi fuerit, causa. In Gittin. vii. 1. quem cepit Cardiacus. *Bartenora*: animus perturbatur ob malum spiritum, qui prædominatur in eo qui bibit vinum novum. At *Maimon.* est infirmitas, quæ procedit ex recessu cerebri, unde perturbatur mens.

‡ Lex. Polyg.

are always attended with a deprivation of the understanding, and with convulsive agitations, or a frantic and mad behaviour. Besides madness, and (what are so nearly allied to it) epileptic fits, I know of no distemper that the antients ascribed to possession; unless, perhaps, fits of apoplexy *, which also affect the brain, the supposed residence of those demons who entered the bodies of men. Whatever may have occurred to others, who have a more enlarged view of the subject; yet, with respect to myself, I must own, that, after having taken some pains in making enquiry into the sense of the antients upon it, I have not been able to find any case of (what was called) demoniacal possession, that was not attended with some disorder of the understanding. Indeed, it seems to me very unlikely, that any instance from amongst the antients should ever be produced of a person said to be possessed, who was in his right mind; inasmuch as all the antients, in their several languages, employed the word which signified possession, to express madness. How far the language of scripture corresponds with these sentiments of Pagan and Jewish antiquity, will appear in the following section.

* I have seen Galen appealed to, in proof of the antients ascribing apoplexies to the possession of demons. But a learned physician whom I consulted, though he made very diligent search, could not find any passage to this purpose in the works of that voluminous writer.

SECTION

SECTION VI.

Prop. VI. *The demoniacs spoken of in the New Testament were all either madmen or epileptics.*

DEMONIACS are often either expressly mentioned or referred to in the New Testament, by the unbelieving Jews, as well as by Christ and his apostles. With respect to the Jews, it hath been already shewn, from their own writings, that they considered demoniacs as insane in their understanding. And agreeable hereto is the representation made of their sentiments on this point in the Gospel.

Some of the Jews, offended with Christ's discourses, said, *He hath a demon, and is mad; why hear ye him*?* If we understand these words in the strictest sense, the Jews intended to reproach Christ both with possession and madness. For these two, when thus joined together, are not necessarily to be understood as synonymous terms; possession may be put for the apprehended *cause*, and madness for the supposed *effect*. It was from the latter that men inferred the former; or, in other words, madness was the *evidence* † of possession. On the other hand, as

* John x. 20. Δαιμόνιον ἔχει καὶ μαίνεται. In like manner Isocrates (Orat. Areopagit. vol. i. p. 348. ed. Battie,) makes mention of κακοδαιμονησαντων και μανεντων ανθρωπων.

† Thus in Philostratus, (Vit. Apollon. Tyan. lib. iii. cap. 38. p. 128.) when the mother was asked, why she thought her son possessed by a demon, she replied, The demon ᾧ ξυγχωρει αυτω μη ἐχειν sanam illum mente patitur esse.

possession sometimes denoted mere madness, from whatever cause it proceeded, it is possible they might design to reproach him with this alone. Nevertheless, on this supposition, their language is grounded on the connexion there was originally supposed to be between possession and insanity. Those who thought favourably of Christ replied to the calumny of his enemies, *These are not the words of him who hath a demon**; that is, "We cannot discover any thing, in his discourses, that looks like the ravings of a demoniac, or from whence it can be justly inferred that he is disordered in his understanding."

At another time the Jews, being unable to bear the severe reproofs of this divine prophet, broke out again into rage and revilings: *Say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan,* (one that bearest us the most implacable hatred,) *and hast a demon*†, that is, "art quite beside thyself?" Or they might mean, that he was a *possessed madman.* Jesus replied, *I have not a demon*‡, "I speak the words of truth and soberness." When he added, *If a man keep my sayings, he shall never see death*§; his enemies, from the bitterest malignity, wresting his words into an absurd sense, accuse him again, *Now we know thou hast a demon*‖, "nothing can be more evident, than that (under the influence of an evil spirit) you must have lost your senses." *Abraham is dead, and the prophets, and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste*

* John x. 21. † Ch. viii. 48. ‡ Ver. 49.
§ Ver. 51. ‖ Ver. 52.

of

of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who is dead; and the prophets, who are dead? Whom makest thou thyself? On an occasion still different from these, they repeat the same language. He had accused them of a design to take away his life; which they thus disclaim, *Thou hast a devil (demon), who goeth about to kill thee**. "What evidence have you of our wanting to murder you? If your understanding were not disturbed (by a demon), you would not have advanced such a groundless charge†."

Nor was it *raving madness* only that the Jews ascribed to demons, but that species of madness also called *melancholy*. *When John came neither eating*

* Ch. vii. 20.

† The foregoing passages may, perhaps, enable us to understand Mark iii. 22. *The scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub.* A learned and ingenious writer conjectures that the meaning is, *He hath Beelzebub at hand as his associate and minister.* But *to have a demon* doth on other occasions import *being possessed* by him. Nor is this meaning of the phrase unsuitable to the occasion on which it is used here. Such multitudes thronged after Christ, at this time, to be healed and instructed, that he had no leisure to take the necessary refreshments of nature; and it was even said, ὅτι ἐξέστη, *that he is fainting away*; Mark iii. 20, 21. (See Gen. xlv. 26. Josh. ii. 11. Is. vii. 2. and compare Casaubon on Enthusiasm, p. 63.) This occasioned his friends *to lay hold on him* (κρατησαι αυτον), to press him to take some refreshment; just as it is said in the case of Elisha, the woman *laid hold on him* (ἐκρατησεν αυτου,) *to eat bread*, 2 Kings iv. 8. (as Casaubon observes, p. 65.) Now such was the malignity of the scribes from Jerusalem against our Lord, that they took occasion from this circumstance (viz. his suffering his zeal to carry him such great lengths) to reproach him with being possessed by the prince of demons, or with the highest degree of absurdity and insanity.

*nor drinking, they say, He hath a demon**. From his secluding himself from the cheerful converse of men, in the wilderness, and practising great abstinence and mortification, they inferred that John was under the power of melancholy, and therefore was possessed. From the foregoing passages† of Scripture it appears, in what light demoniacs were regarded in our Saviour's time, and by those very persons who conversed personally with him. And their sentiments

* Matt. xviii. 11. Luke vii. 33.

† In the several passages cited above, I have explained the phrase, *having a demon*, in such a manner as to include in it the idea of *possession* as well as that of *insanity*; because both these were *originally* included in it. Nevertheless, it ought to be observed, that words often lose a part of their original meaning; and that this may be the case here. *Having a demon*, might be, and probably was, used by the Jews in general, as the equivalent phrase, *being possessed by a demon*, certainly was by Josephus in particular, to express mere madness without including in it demoniacal possession as the cause. It is certainly not *necessary* to understand the phrase in its most extensive meaning, in all, or indeed in any of the passages which we have cited: for what the Jews wanted to infer from the discourses of Christ, and the behaviour of John, was, that they were disordered in their understandings, and therefore not worthy to be attended to. *Why hear ye him?* was their language concerning Christ. John x. 20. To me it seems evident, that the principal idea affixed to the phrase in question was that of insanity. So the Jews themselves explain it, *He hath a demon; and is mad.* When some, who thought favourably of Christ, replied, *These are not the words of him who hath a demon*, they must mean, that they observed in his discourses no signs of phrensy; nor doth it appear that they meaned more than this, by denying that he had a demon. Indeed, if persons spoken of as possessed were not disordered in their understanding, why might they not speak and act as rationally as other men? In a word, the whole debate turned upon this single point: Is there or not any thing in Christ's discourses inconsistent with a sound understanding?

are

are perfectly conformable to those of all other persons in the antient world.

What reason then is there to suppose, that Christ and his apostles entertained a different idea of demoniacs from what all other persons did? This is a point which ought not to be admitted without proof. If there be no proof of it, (and none hath ever yet been offered,) the very contrary ought to be admitted. It should be taken always for granted, (as we observed before on another occasion,) that all men use words in their ordinary signification, when there is no reason to believe the contrary. The New Testament, however, furnishes us with clear and certain proof, that the sacred writers did use the phrase, *having a demon*, in the same sense as others did.

This proof arises in part from the account given of the Gadarene demoniac*: St. Mark describes him as a man *with* (or rather *in*) *an unclean spirit* †; and St. Luke calls him *a man that had demons* ‡. From this last phrase, if interpreted agreeably to the use of it amongst the Jews, we may infer that he was not in his right mind, and the same inference may also be drawn from the former. For we have shewn elsewhere §, that to be *in the spirit*, is an expression that implies

* Matthew mentions two demoniacs, ch. viii. 28. But Mark (ch. v. 2.) and Luke (ch. viii. 27.) take notice only of one; as I likewise shall do in this place, my present argument not depending upon their number.

† Εν πνευματι ακαθαρτῳ, Mark v. 2.

‡ Ὁς εἰχε δαιμονια, Luke viii. 27.

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some suspension of our own faculties, and our thinking and acting under a foreign impulse and impression. This phrase, *being in a spirit*, is equivalent to that which more frequently occurs, *having a spirit* or *demon*; as appears not only by comparing Mark and Luke together, in the passages here referred to, but also from Mark himself. For the very same person, concerning whom he says* that he was *in an unclean spirit*, he describes† as the man that *had the legion*, and was *possessed by a demon*. If the former phrase, therefore, imports a spiritual impulse that controls the rational faculties, the latter must do so too. The farther particulars mentioned concerning the demoniac at Gadara confirm this account of his disorder. For we are told that he had been often bound with chains and fetters, and as often broke them ‡, impatient of all restraint; that he lived amongst the tombs §, far from the converse of men, making dreadful

* Ch. v. 2. † Ver. 15, 16.

‡ See below, ch. ii. sect. 1, No. 4.

§ The melancholy, especially under the paroxysms of this disorder, delight in solitude and darkness. Maimonides in Sabbat. II. 5. Dr. Lightfoot tells us, (Hor. Heb. on Matt. viii. 28.) that lodging among the tombs was reckoned by the Jews as one sign of a madman: compare Wetsten. in loc. p. 355. Dr. Freind likewise (History of Physick, part i. p. 18, 21.) says, that one of the most remarkable symptoms of the madness called lycanthropy was, *to wander amongst the sepulchres of the dead.* Bellerophon is described by Homer, lib. vi. ver. 202. ωατον ανθρωπων αλειτων, vestigia hominum vitans. See Euripidis Bacch. v. 32, 33. A similar passage from Aëtius III. 8, 2. is cited by Wetsten. on Matt. viii. 28. p. 354. The sepulchres in the eastern countries are not in towns and cities, but in solitary and unfrequented places; and in this view they suited the melancholy apprehensions

ful outcries day and night; that he was so exceedingly fierce, as to make it dangerous for travellers to pass near him*; that he wounded himself with flints, and was without clothing. The conversation he held with Christ is a farther proof of his insanity; as there will be occasion to shew in the sequel. After his cure, he is described as being *in his right mind*†; which before his cure, therefore, he could not be; for this description of him is directly opposed to his former state as a demoniac, or as one said to be possessed by demons‡. From hence it follows, not only that this demoniac was a madman; but that his being such was an idea intended to be conveyed of him by the historians, when they described him as a demoniac. They might also hereby farther intend, that his madness was regarded as the effect of possession, or such as was usually ascribed to that cause.

This man and his associate are the only instances

prehensions of demoniacs. But what seems to have disposed them to resort to these mansions of the dead, rather than to other gloomy recesses, was the apprehension of their being possessed by the souls of dead men, which were supposed, wicked souls especially, to hover up and down about their burying-places. See Plato's Phædon, p. 386, C. ed. Ficini. Macrobius in Somn. Scip. lib. i. cap. 9, 13. Porphyr. de Abstin. lib. ii. § 47. Lactant. Div. Institut. lib. ii. cap. 2. Tibullus I. 6. 15. See also Hieronymus Magius, Variarum Lectionum, seu Miscellaneorum, lib. iv. cap. 12.

* See Wetstenius on Matt. viii. 28.

† Σωφρονουντα, Mark v. 15. Luke viii. 35.

‡ *They see him that was possessed with a demon* (τον δαιμονιζομενον) *and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind*, Mark v. 15. See also Luke viii. 35. In like manner, *speaking the words of soberness* (σωφροσυνης) is opposed to *being mad*, Act. xxvi. 25.

of

of demoniacs whose case is recorded with such particular circumstances. But when persons are described in the same *general* terms as these men are, as *having demons*, or *an unclean spirit*, and in terms of the same import; ought we not to understand this language, on these occasions, in a sense conformable to the use of it in a case where it is impossible to mistake its meaning? If, in the history of the Gadarene demoniac, the evangelists used this language to express madness; did they exclude this idea from it at other times, for the sake of contradicting themselves, as well as all the rest of the world?

Those who lived near the times of the evangelists were under no difficulty to understand their meaning; as appears from a passage of Celsus concerning Mary Magdalene; in which he calls her *a distracted woman**, referring to the account given of her in the gospels, *that out of her went seven demons* †. *Seven* ‡ was sometimes used by the Jews as the number of perfection, and it frequently denotes *several* or *many* §. The meaning therefore is, agreeably to what Celsus thought, that she was cured of *the most violent phrensy*, such as was in that age described by the being possessed by many demons.

There is another instance of reputed possession mentioned in the New Testament, of which it will be

* Γυνη παροιστρος, ὡς φατε, Cels. apud Origen. c. Cels. p. 96.

† Matt. xvi. 19. Luke viii. 1, 2.

‡ Ps. xii. 6. Compare Grotius on Matt. xii. 45.

§ Levit. xxvi. 18, 21, 24, 28. Deut. xxviii. 7, 25. 1 Sam. ii. 5. Job v. 19.

proper

proper to take notice here. I refer to the case of the damsel that had *a spirit of Python or Apollo**. She was supposed to be inspired and possessed by the same spirit of Apollo that delivered oracles in the Pythian temple. But no prophetess was thought to be inspired or possessed, but when she was mad and raving†. The *Pythia*, in particular, no sooner received the prophetic afflatus than she seemed like one distracted‡. The Philippian damsel, therefore, so far as she was thought to be under the same afflatus, was proportionably disordered in her understanding. Minucius Felix expressly represents the prophets and prophetesses who ran about the streets, as raving, raging; and rolling their heads, in the same manner as those in the temples were used to do§. The manner in which the Pythoness at Philippi followed Paul for many days, confirms the other evidence of her insanity. And the sacred historian (adopting the phraseology of the age and country in which he lived) designed to express the species of her insanity, by describing the damsel as one possessed by the prophesying demon of Apollo. We have here then a new proof, that those

* See above, p. 33, 34.

† Dissertation on Miracles, p. 176, 12mo, and p. 276, 8vo. See also above, p. 46. Plato's Phædr. p. 1220, C. D. E. Euripid. Bacch. v. 295. 664, 1091, &c. Euripid. Troad. v. 307, 341, 366, &c. Plutarch. de Orac. defect. p. 432. F. p. 438. et de Placit. Philos. lib. v. cap. 1.

‡ Potter's Gr. Antiq. p. 246.

§ Hi sunt et furentes, quos in publicum videtis excurrere, vates et ipsi absque templo, sic insaniunt, sic bacchantur, sic rotantur. Minucii Felicis Octavius, cap. 27.

who

who were thought to be possessed were disordered in their minds.

With regard to *epileptics*, it hath been observed above*, that if their distemper was by the antients ascribed to possession, it was because it was attended with a deprivation of the understanding, or loss of sense, and with the signs of phrensy. There is reason therefore sufficient to presume, that the epileptic youth, whose case is so particularly described in the New Testament†, must have been thus affected. That he really was so, appears in the fullest manner from the several particulars mentioned concerning him by the evangelists. For they represent him as making grievous out-cries, foaming at the mouth, gnashing with his teeth, being convulsed, thrown violently on the ground, and often falling into the fire and into the water. These symptoms are a full proof, that under the paroxysms of his disorder he had no use of his understanding, nor any command over the organs of his body. Nay, the foregoing symptoms of insanity were regarded as the proofs of his being possessed. This appears from the language of his father: *Have mercy on my son, for he is lunatic, and sore vexed with a demon:* FOR *oft-times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water*‡. In the interval

* P. 53.

† Matt. xvii. 15. Mark ix. 18. Luke ix. 38.

‡ Matt. xvii. 15, σεληνιαζεται, και κακως πασχει. This last description of him is fully explained by the spirit's taking him, and tearing him, &c. Mark ix. 17, 18. Luke ix. 39,

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of his fits the demon was supposed to *depart* from him. These intervals were of short continuance, and he scarce recovered from one fit before he was seized with another: on which account it is said, *The spirit hardly departed from him.*

The several circumstances concerning this youth related in the evangelic history, serve to illustrate the sentiments of the antients concerning possessions. They furnish a new proof, that when the patient was *seized* by a demon, he was no longer master of himself, and had no use of his understanding; and that he came to himself again when the demon *departed.* They likewise serve to shew, that demons were thought, in some instances, to seize and suspend the *senses*, as well as the *understandings* of the patients. For the father said, *My son hath a dumb spirit*; and Christ calls the spirit both *dumb and deaf.* From this language it appears, that the youth was not dumb and deaf at all times, and from a defect in the organs of speech and hearing, but only during the time of his supposed possession, that is, under the paroxysms of his epilepsy, which the antients ascribed to the incursion of demons.

From the whole of what hath been hitherto offered in this section it is, I apprehend, evident, that the demoniacs spoken of in the New Testament (like those we meet with in all other writings of equal antiquity) were supposed to have demons (that is, the souls of wicked men) residing in them, and to act entirely under their malignant influence: that these demoniacs were either madmen of one kind or other,

or

or subject to epileptic fits (which are ever attended with loss of sense, and a suspension of the regular exercise of the understanding): and that it was from the symptoms of these disorders that it was inferred the patients were possessed by demons. When they saw a person acting as if he was in a deep melancholy, which the Jews thought John the Baptist was, because he denied himself the pleasures of society, and the usual refreshments of nature; when they observed any speaking and behaving irrationally, and strangely bent upon doing mischief to themselves and others, as madmen are apt to be; or having no command over themselves, not even over the members of their own bodies, like epileptics; it was from hence concluded, that the patient had a demon. If at the same time the patient lost his sight, his speech, or hearing, when there was no visible defect in the organs, the patient was said to have a demon that was blind, dumb, or deaf.

To the account here given of the demoniacs of the New Testament, as being either maniacs or epileptics, several objections have been raised, which it will be necessary for us to examine.

The very accurate and judicious Dr. Lardner* contends, "that all those said to have evil spirits were not discomposed in their mind." And he† considers the case of the epileptic youth, just now explained, as a proof of this assertion. But it hath been already shewn, that the symptoms of his disorder which are

* Case of the Demoniacs, p. 98. Compare p. 25.

† P. 98, 87.

so

so particularly recorded, and which are expressly assigned as the reason of their supposing him to be possessed, are an incontestable demonstration that he did not, during the paroxysms of his disorder, enjoy the sober use of his reason.

It will be necessary to take notice of the other instances which Dr. Lardner hath produced with the same view*. One is the man in the synagogue, *with* (or, *in*) *an unclean spirit*†. Waving the argument drawn from these expressions above‡, I will only observe, that this person had the epilepsy or falling sickness §, as the learned writer himself allows ‖. His case therefore hath, in effect, been considered already.

Besides those already mentioned, there are two instances appealed to by Dr. Lardner, which deserve a more particular consideration: *the dumb man, a demoniac*, (or *the dumb demoniac*,) mentioned by St. Matthew ¶, and the demoniac *blind and dumb* described both by this evangelist** and by St. Luke††. We have before shewn, that *to be a demoniac* denotes in the New Testament, as in all other antient authors,

* P. 57.

† Εν πνευματι ακαθαρτω, Mark i. 23, 26. Luke describes him as (εχων πνευμα δαιμονιου ακαθαρτου, *having the spirit of an unclean demon*, ch. iv. 33.

‡ P. 59.

§ This appears from his being *thrown down* (Luke iv. 35.), and *torn and convulsed*, Mark i. 26.

‖ P. 57.

¶ Ανθρωπον κωφον δαιμονιζομενον, Matt. ix. 32.

** Ch. xii. 22. †† Ch. xi. 14.

a possessed

a possessed madman, or rather a person afflicted with such kind and degree of madness as was originally ascribed to possession. Such therefore each of these demoniacs must have been, under whatever other disorders they might labour. It is not pretended that their other disorders were inconsistent with what was called possession; they were rather considered as the effect of it. In the *first* case, the demoniac or madman was *dumb*; and his dumbness probably arose from the natural turn of his disorder, which was that species of madness called *melancholy*, of which taciturnity or dumbness is a very common effect. This symptom the antients, who considered melancholy as the effect of possession, expressed by saying the patient had a *dumb spirit*; hereby distinguishing this dumbness from that which is owing to natural causes, or to a defect in the organs of speech *. Agreeably hereto we are told, that when *the demon was gone out* (or the madness imputed to the demon was cured), *the dumb man spake* †. When the prophetess Pythia was out of her senses, and oppressed with too strong an inspiration, she was said *to be filled with a dumb and evil spirit* ‡. The *second* likewise was a case of *melancholy*, which in the opinion of the ablest judges, Hippocrates and Galen §, may produce either

* See above, p. 65.

† Matt. ix. 33.

‡ Αλαλου και κακου πνευματος. Plutarch. de Orac. defect. p. 433.

§ Hippocrates in his Aphorisms, lib. vi. aph. 56, and Galen in his observations upon it.

apoplexies,

apoplexies, or convulsions, or *blindness*, according to the part on which the pituitous humour falls*. These cases, therefore, do not at all disagree with that idea of a demoniac which we before endeavoured to establish, which is that of a person under an alienation of mind, or disorder of understanding, proceeding, or originally thought to proceed, from the possession of demons.

The learned writer† further appeals to paralytical cases in support of his hypothesis. But paralytics are never spoken of in the Gospel as demoniacs. Nay, the Gospel expressly distinguishes palsies from possessions ‡. Dr. Lardner§ likewise presses into the service two passages which have been already explained ‖; that which speaks of a woman whom *Satan bound*; and that which describes all diseased persons as *oppressed by the devil*. With regard to both these passages, it has been shewn that a distinction should be made between disorders which the Jews considered as *inflicted* by evil spirits, and such as they ascribed to evil spirits *possessing* mankind. Diseased persons

* These observations may serve to explain the case of the epileptic youth more fully than we did above, p. 64, 65. He had a spirit that was not only *dumb*, like the persons whose case we are considering, but *deaf* also. With regard to this last circumstance it may be observed, that if the pituitous humour falling upon the *optic* nerves occasions blindness, as the most learned physicians tell us it will, the same humour falling upon the *auditory* nerves may occasion deafness.

† P. 98.

‡ Matt. iv. 24, cited above, p. 38.

§ P. 58, 59. ‖ P. 44, 45.

in

in general were thought to suffer under the power of evil spirits; but those only were thought to be possessed, whom evil spirits entered and actuated, occupying the seat of the human soul, and performing its various functions. If possession was common to all the diseased, it could not have been employed in the manner it is in the New Testament, to distinguish one sort of diseased persons from another.

We have now examined all Dr. Lardner's objections to the account we have given of the Gospel demoniacs. And if *he* (who was so well acquainted with the subject) did not think it liable to any other, we may presume no other can be raised against it.

I shall close this section with observing,

1. That what hath been here offered confirms what was before* advanced to prove, that demoniacs laboured under real and violent disorders. Such, it will be allowed, epilepsies and madness are.

2. From the foregoing account of the Gospel demoniacs, it also appears upon what grounds possessions might be distinguished from diseases in general, and from lunacies in particular.

It hath been shewn† that, on several occasions, the New Testament includes possessions under the general terms *sicknesses and diseases*; and consequently considers them as one particular species of them. At other times it distinguishes possessions from diseases in general, in conformity to the popular language, which it adopted on this subject, for reasons

* Sect. iv. † P. 38, 39.

that

that will be explained hereafter *. Those who first introduced this language considered possessions as distinct from every kind of diseases; for, while the latter implied some disorder in the corporeal system, the former, in their opinion, supposed the corporeal system, however sound in itself, to be actuated and over-ruled by a superior agent.

But to some it seems strange, that possessions, if they import madness, should be distinguished from lunacies. That the New Testament doth distinguish between them I readily allow †; and it is not without reason that a learned writer ‡ blames those who confound them together. But the anti-demonist is under no necessity of doing this. In order to understand this matter, it is necessary to examine the sentiments of antiquity concerning it; for the evangelists have not delivered any new system of physics, but on such subjects followed the modes of speaking then in use. Now it was the general opinion of antiquity, that some diseases are owing to the influence of the celestial bodies; and that the paroxysms and periods of others are regulated by the moon in particular §. This was the case more especially with respect to *epileptic diseases*, the fits of which, it was affirmed, con-

* See below, ch. ii. sect. iii.

† Matt. iv. 24.

‡ Dr. Warburton, Serm. vol. iii. p. 224, 225. Some expressions of Dr. Sykes, against whom the bishop's sermon is particularly levelled, seem to have given occasion to the censure of this learned writer.

§ Dr. Mead's Treatise concerning the Influence of the Sun and Moon upon human Bodies, and the Diseases thereby produced, p. 1, 2.

stantly

stantly returned every new and full moon. Galen says, *the moon governs the periods of epileptic cases**; and others referred the disease entirely to this planet†. Hence *epileptics* were, by the Greeks and Latins, called *lunatics*. The evangelist Matthew, therefore, without doubt, by lunatics meaned epileptics‡. He could not be ignorant of the common signification of this term; and hath himself recorded an instance of its application to an epileptic case§. Hence it appears on what grounds the antients in general, and the evangelists in particular, distinguished between demoniacs and lunatics: the former of whom we call maniacs, and the latter epileptics. These two disorders are attended with very different symptoms; and they were formerly by some ascribed to different causes, (one to the inhabitation of demons, the other to the influence of the moon,) from which they borrowed their respective denominations. It is necessary to add, that the same person was reputed by many, both a demoniac and a lunatic: a demoniac, because they referred the epilepsy to the possession of demons; a lunatic, because the fits of this disorder were thought to keep lunar periods. If some asserted the natural influence of the moon upon this disorder,

* De Diebus criticis, l. iii. cited by Mead, p. 38.

† Aretæus de diuturnis Morbis, l. i. cap. 4. or Mead, p. 46.

‡ Epileptics *were, by the Greek writers, sometimes called* σεληνιαζοι, (Alexand. Trallian. l. i. c. 25) *and in the histories of the Gospel,* σεληνιαζομενοι, (Matt. xvii. 15.) *and by some of the Latins afterwards, lunatici,* (Apuleius de Virtutibus Herbar. c. 9. et 65.) Mead, p. 38. See also note * next page.

§ Matt. xvii. 15.

others

others taught, that the patients were more subject to the incursions of demons at the changes of this planet than at any other time*. This, perhaps, was thought to be the case of the youth described in the Gospel. His father represents him both as *lunatic* and *sore vexed* with a demon. He was what some modern physicians † call *epileptic mad* ‡. He was not considered as being mad or vexed with a demon at all times, but only under the paroxysms of his epileptic disorder, which returned at the changes of the moon §. These observations serve to account for the language

* Apud Matt. iv. 24, ubi Græcè est σεληνιαζομενους, interpres Arabs (in editione Romanâ, 1619) si Latinè exponamus, vertit, ruentes in principiis lunationum. Maximè vero plenilunio infestantur. Nec obscura est ratio; quia tum plenius cerebrum est humoribus; unde et tunc idonei magis, qui a dæmone vexentur. Talis epilepticus ille qui a Matthæo, xvii. 14, lunaticus dicitur: Lucæ autem ix. 39. dæmoniacus vocatur. Hanc rem sic expressit Juvencus, l. iii.

Nam cursus lunæ natum mihi dæmonis arte
Torquet.

Vossius on Idolatry, l. ii. c. 19. p. 203. Stillingfleet, Orig. Sacr. p. 166. See also Grotius on Matt. xvii. 15, and Mark ix. 27; and the citation from Lucian produced above, p. 48, note *. Pricæus, on Matt. iv. 24, in the 5th volume of the Critici Sacri, p. 8296, hath the following note: Basil de fœneratoribus agens, Μανιακοι απαιτηται, ὡς περι τας επιληψιας ποιουντες δαιμονιες, κατα τας περιοδους της σεληνης τοις πτωχοις επιθημενοι. Isiodorus Orig. iv. 7. de Epilepticis, hos vulgus lunaticos vocat, quòd per hunc cursum comitetur eos insania dæmonum.

† Mead, p. 46, 47.

‡ See Mead, p. 46. This learned writer observes concerning the lunatics of the Gospel, Ii autem aut insani erant, aut insani simul et epileptici. Medica Sacra, p. 83. See above, p. 53, note †.

§ It is very observable, that our Saviour, in curing this young man, not only commanded the unclean spirit to come out of him, but also

language of the evangelists, both when they distinguish possessions from lunacies, and when they join them together as kindred disorders.

3. It may be observed farther, that the reason which induced the antients to ascribe madness and epileptic fits to possession rather than other disorders, could not be that very general one commonly assigned, viz. that in the earliest ages men could not account for the epilepsy (for example) without having recourse to a supernatural agency. For, without having recourse to that agency, they could not account for the palsy, the leprosy, and other disorders, as was shewn above. The true reason therefore must be drawn from the *peculiar* symptoms of the epilepsy, and certain kinds of madness, which were such as seemed to them to argue not a transient act of some evil spirit, or an effect produced in the human body all at once by his operation upon it; but his *entrance* into the body; his seizing the mind, thereby preventing the regular use of the rational faculties, and sometimes of the corporeal senses; and his causing the patient to speak and act under his direction. Now, these symptoms do not at all agree with other disorders, such as the palsy, the leprosy, and pestilence, which, nevertheless, were ascribed to the anger of the gods. It is a matter, however, of little importance, to determine precisely what the reason was of the antients ascrib-

to enter no more into him. His afflicted father might have feared that his son's disorder, though it now suddenly ceased, might return at the next change of the moon. Our Saviour, therefore, in his great goodness, assures him it should return no more.

ing

ing either epileptic or maniacal cases, rather than other distempers, to demoniacal possession. The fact itself, with which alone we are concerned, is sufficiently established by the concurrent testimony of Pagans and Jews, and the writers of the New Testament. I will only add, that,

4. The account here given of demoniacs is confirmed by the antient Christian writers, who describe demoniacs as persons disordered in their mind. Celsus, we have seen *, plainly supposes that Christians understood them to be such. And Justin Martyr, in express terms, says, "that those who are seized and thrown down by the souls of the deceased, are such as all men agree in calling *demoniacs* and *mad*." Eusebius represents Montanus as seized with *possession* and *madness* †. Indeed, all the demoniacs of the antient Christians were mad, melancholy, or epileptic persons ‡.

SECTION

* Page 62.

† Eccles. Hist. l. v. c. 16. The following passages from Lactantius (Divin. Institut. l. iv. c. 27. p. 345. 347. ed. Dufresnoy) fully explain the sentiments of the antient Christians, both concerning the demoniacs in their times, and those who were cured by Christ. Nam sicut ipse (sc. Christus) cùm inter homines ageret, universos dæmones verbo fugabat; hominumque *mentes emotas*, et malis incursibus *furiatas*, *in sensus pristinos reponebat*: ita nunc, &c. Ecce aliquis instinctu dæmonis percitus, *dementit*, *effertur*, *insanit*. Minucius Felix also (Octavius, c. 27.) gives the following account of those actuated by demons: Hi sunt et furentes, quos in publicum videtis excurrere, vates et ipsi absque templo, sic insaniunt, sic bacchantur, sic rotantur.

‡ The proofs of this point, in that most learned and penetrating writer, Mr. Joseph Mede, p. 30, must not be here omitted, though they are also to be found in Wetstein, vol. i. p. 283. Canon.

SECTION VII.

Prop. VII. *Demoniacal possessions (whether they are supposed to be real or imaginary), and the disorders imputed to them, were not peculiar to the country of Judea and the time of Christ; nor doth it appear that they abounded more in that country, or at that time, than any other.*

IT hath been confidently asserted, that there were no demoniacs, or not so many, amongst any other people as the Jews; nor amongst them but about our Saviour's time. Hence unbelievers (unhappily prejudiced against the Gospel by such misrepresentations of it) have asked, "How came it to pass, that the devil had more power over the worshippers of the true God, than over those who had renounced their allegiance to him? And how came the devil to exert his power at the appearance of his judge and avenger, rather than at any other time, when he might do it with more hopes of impunity? or, Can we regard Christ as the Saviour of mankind, if he gave the devil new powers to destroy them?"

In answering these objections, Christian writers, instead of inquiring into the truth of the fact, have

Apost. 79. ἐαν τις δαιμονα εχῃ, πληρικος μη γενεσθω. Balsamon in Can. thus explains what it is to have a demon: ὁ δαιμονιζομενος στερηται λογισμου και διαθεσεως. He afterwards calls the demoniac μαινομενον, and distinguishes μανιαν εκ διαλειμματος, aut διηνεκως. Vide Chrysostomi Epist. προς Σταγειριον δαιμονωντα. Eum omnino affectum videbis prout quos nos *melancholicos* appellamus. Vide eundem de precibus in ecclesia pro energumenis, Homil. 4 et 5. De incomprehensibili Dei Natura, versus finem, inter sermones ad pop. Antioch.

chosen

chosen rather to take it for granted, and set themselves to account for it.

"There might be possessions in former times," say they, "though there are none now. A greater liberty and power might be allowed the evil spirit in the age of Christ than in any other, on account of *the intimate relation that demoniacal possessions have to the doctrine of redemption**, and for other weighty reasons, such as the glory that accrued to God, and the testimony that was borne to Jesus†, when Satan was cast out by a divine power." On this last account, one‡ learned writer affirms, that "in the possession of the bodies of men he seems to have been, in part, FORCED upon the employment." Nevertheless, according to the same writer, there could have been no great backwardness on the part of the devil to torment mankind; for he says, "It would be strange could we find no marks of the rage of his expiring tyranny§."

This

* Bishop Warburton's Serm. vol. iii. p. 229.

† Id. p. 217. Dr. Macknight's Truth of the Gospel History, p. 169. Stillingfleet, Orig. Sacr. p. 166. This last very learned writer is at a loss to determine whether frequent possessions, at and after the time of Christ, were owing to the malice of the devil, in order to *disparage* the miracles of our Saviour, or to the providence of God, in order to *augment* his glory.

‡ Warburton, p. 220, 221.

§ P. 217. Dr. Jortin thought, (as Jenkins also did) that Providence suffered evil spirits to exert their malignant powers so much at that time, to give a check to Sadduceism amongst the Jews, and to Epicurean atheism amongst the Gentiles. Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. i. p. 14. In the 2d volume, p. 17, 18, he says, that

This reasoning supposes that evil spirits have the natural power of seizing and tormenting the bodies of mankind, (a point more easily assumed than proved,) but that (malevolent as they are) they never or very seldom exerted it before the coming of Christ; either because they were immediately restrained by God, or wanted inclination to do mischief to mankind. In the time of Christ, however, these wicked spirits, it seems, foresaw that they were going to be deprived of a power they had scarce ever used; and being fired with rage and resentment against their conqueror, they began to exert those latent faculties they had hitherto ineffectually possessed. They had, indeed, very little reason to complain of their conqueror, because it was upon his account that they enjoyed a favour that had hitherto been denied them, viz. the temporary liberty of using their native powers; and be-

Christ cured possessed persons, to shew that he came to destroy the empire of Satan, and to remove all suspicion of a confederacy with evil spirits. Semlerus likewise (p. 2, note 1) admits that the devil might then be allowed some unusual power: Minime tam multos homines singulari quadam diaboli ipsius operatione male habitos fuisse.—Paucos autem—forte novo atque antea inaudito mali vehementis genere a diabolo vexatos fuisse; ut appareret, adversus Sadducæorum errorem, &c. See also p. 48, 49. The Scripture hath given no intimation of the devil's being allowed any unusual power in the age of the Gospel. As to possessions, to which our present inquiry relates, they are always referred to demons in the sacred writings. And it would be in vain to attempt merely to reduce the number of demoniacs; for, if you can prove the reality of possession in *one* instance from the language of Scripture, you may prove it in *all*. And if you can account for the Scripture-language concerning possessions in *any* instance, without allowing their reality, you may account for them in *every* instance.

cause

cause that state of inaction to which they were afterwards to be condemned, was no new punishment. The devil, however, according to this account, was reduced to great difficulties. If on the one hand he did not use the liberty he now enjoyed of doing mischief to mankind, how could he assuage his malice? If, on the other hand, he assuaged his malice, he saw he should hereby only contribute to the triumphs of Christ. The first consideration urges him to action; the second restrains him from it. In this perplexity, though doing much mischief be so natural to him, he did but little; till God (I speak it with horror) prompted him to do more, nay *forced* him upon the wicked employment; and did it for the sake of shewing, that he could expel the devil from those bodies which he himself had *compelled* him to enter. Such is the reasoning (if I rightly understand it) employed by the ablest advocates of demoniacal possessions, to account for them in the age of the Gospel, while they deny either their existence, or their equal frequency, at all other times.

If this reasoning did not expose itself only by being stated, it would nevertheless be quite needless to examine its force; because the fact for which it would account, viz. God's permitting or forcing the devil to take possession of men's bodies, in the time of Christ, and at no other, hath no foundation to support it. All the arguments therefore brought to shew, that it became God to grant the devil a "greater licence at this juncture than at any time before or since," impeach the wisdom of the Divine Being; and, did they

prove any thing, would prove, that God ought to have done what, nevertheless, he did not do.

Many ages before the birth of Christ, and in other countries besides Judea, men ascribed their diseases in general to spirits *. With respect to demoniacs in particular, we meet with them, as we have seen †, in writers of great antiquity, particularly in Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, as well as in later dramatic poets; nor are they mentioned in a manner that would lead us to suppose they were not as common as madmen and epileptics are amongst us. These dramatic writers, it should be remembered, give us the truest representation of life and manners. Demoniacs occur also in their historians ‡, as well as where we might most naturally expect them, in the writings of their physicians. From Hippocrates § it appears, that it was a very common thing among his contemporaries, to ascribe the epilepsy and different species of madness to the possession of demons and heroes. With respect to their philosophers ‖, it is needless to appeal to the testimony of particular persons; for demonology composed a very eminent part of the Pythagorean and Platonic philosophy ¶, which pre-

* See above, p. 41, note †; and Homer's Odyss. v. 396.

† P. 23. 78. 87.

‡ Herodotus, cited above, p. 52.

§ De Morbo Sacro.

‖ Demoniacs are mentioned in Aristotle, in such a manner as to shew, that though he denied, others asserted their existence. See below, sect. ix. p. 92.

¶ See Plutarch, De Placit. Phil. lib. v. cap. 1. Cicero, De Divinat. lib. i. § 5, 6. 82. 87.

vailed

vailed greatly after as well as before the time of Christ. Lucian wrote his Philopseudes on purpose to expose the folly of the learned physicians and the most able philosophers, the heads of their several sects, for their absurd attachment to demonism, possessions, and magic *. These articles, at that time, seem to have composed the common creed of all men, except the followers of Democritus †. The express mention made of demoniacs (under this very name) by Lucian ‡, by Plutarch §, and by Apollonius ‖, bears ample testimony to the common persuasion concerning the existence of such persons in their times. The established theology of the heathen world, from its first rise to its final overthrow, rested upon the basis of

* In the Philopseudes of Lucian, Cleodomus the *Peripatetic*, Dinomachus the *Stoic*, and Ion the *Platonist*, do all plead the cause of demonism, vol. ii. p. 330, &c. ed. Var. Amstel. 1687. Towards the close of the dialogue, p. 346, a *Pythagorean* is introduced to give his sanction to the same doctrine. So that possessions, exorcisms, and magic composed the creed of the philosophers of different sects, as well as of the common people, in the time of Lucian.

† Lucian, ubi supra, p. 349.

‡ He speaks of those *who delivered demoniacs from their terrors*, τους δαιμονωντας απαλλαττουσι των δεινων, Philopseud. p. 337. See above, p. 14.

§ Plutarch says, (Sympos. l. vii. c. 5.) *The magicians commanded the demoniacs to read over and pronounce the Ephesian letters.* He uses the very word δαιμονιζομενους, which is commonly used in the New Testament.

‖ In Philostratus's Life of Apollonius, mention is made of a young man who had been a demoniac two years, δαιμονα δι δυο ετη, lib. iii. cap. 38, p. 128, ed. Olear. Concerning another youth it is said, ὁ δαιμων ελιπε σε. And Apollonius undertook to cast out demons, lib. iv. cap. 20, p. 157.

demonism. Scarce was there a single oracle delivered but by a person said to be possessed.

With regard to the Jews, Josephus tells us, that the method of exorcism prescribed by Solomon *prevailed or succeeded greatly among them down to his own time**. Indeed, the very existence of *exorcists*†, both before and after the time of Christ, and the general prevalence of *magic arts*‡ amongst this people, as well as amongst the Gentiles, are a full proof that a belief of frequent possessions was common to both. The same conclusion may be drawn from the manner in which such of them as were strangers to the doctrines of Christianity addressed our Saviour: *Have mercy on me,* said the woman of Canaan, *my daughter*

* Και δυτη μεχρι του παρ' ημιν η Σεραπεια πλειστον ισχυει, Antiq. lib. viii. cap. 2. § 5. In speaking of Saul, (Antiq. lib. vi. cap. 8. § 2.) he says, *demons came upon him,* περιηρχετο παθη τινα και δαιμονια, and that *when the demons came upon him, and disturbed him,* (οπστ' αν αυτω προσιοι τα δαιμονια και ταραττοι,)—*David was his only physician against the disturbance he suffered from them, and brought him to his right mind again,* προς των απο των δαιμονων ταραχην,—μονος ιατρος ην—και παλιν ιαυτου γενεσθαι τον Σαυλον. In cap. 11. § 2, he makes Jonathan say to his father, that *when an evil spirit and demons seized him, David cast them out,* (εξ. Σαλεν.) In his Jewish War, lib. vii. cap. 6. § 3, he says, the plant baaras *drives away* (εξελαυνει) *demons.* Elsewhere (Ant. lib. viii. cap. 2. § 5.) he speaks of a demon's *going out* (εξιεναι) of the possessed person, and being adjured to *return no more.* This phraseology is very conformable to that of the Gospel.

† Matt. xii. 27. Acts xix. 13. Joseph. Antiq. lib. viii. cap. 2. § 5. Justin. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 311. Iren. lib. ii. cap. 6. § 2. Origen. cont. Cels. lib. i. p. 17. lib. iv. p. 183, 184.

‡ See Lightfoot, vol. ii. p. 175. Beza, Whitby, Grotius on Acts xix. 13. 19, and Biscoe's History of the Acts, p. 290.

*is grievously vexed with a demon**. In the same style, a Jew implores his compassion on behalf of his son: *Look on my son; he hath a spirit, and is sore vexed*†. It was not those who received, but those who rejected, the doctrines of Christ, that reproached him and his forerunner with *having a demon*‡. So that the Scripture itself furnishes abundant evidence that the doctrine of possessions was prior to the Christian æra. Hence it comes to pass, that possessions are never mentioned in the Gospel history with any degree of surprise, as a thing *new* or *extraordinary*, but altogether as a matter to which they had been accustomed. Nor did the enemies of Christ ever reproach him with introducing demons into Judea, merely for the sake of displaying his power over them; nor on this account accuse him of acting in concert with them; which nevertheless it would have been natural for them to do, had possessions never been heard of till the time of Christ, and then only in Judea.

That the same notions concerning them, which prevailed in Judea in the age of the Gospel, were current in the succeeding as well as in the preceding ages, and in other countries, is evident not only from the authorities already cited, but also from the writings of the Christian fathers (to say nothing of those of the latter Platonists). It would be endless to produce all the passages from the fathers, in which possessions

* Matt. xv. 21, 22. Mark vii. 24. See also Acts xvi. 16. 18. xix. 13.

† Matt. xvii. 15. Mark ix. 17. Luke ix. 39.

‡ Matt. xi. 18. John viii. 48. 52.

are either asserted or referred to. There is no subject so familiar to them as this; there is nothing they boast of so much as the power of the meanest Christian to eject demons from the bodies of men *. In the history of the church there is more frequent mention made of possessions than in any other annals †. So little truth is there in the assertion, that we never hear of them but in the time of Christ.

Surely, no men forget themselves more than those do, who sometimes would persuade us, that the devil's tyranny *expired* (as well as revived) at the coming of Christ; and, at other times, maintain the credit of those writers, who, in every succeeding age, represent the devil as being every day dispossessed by Christians.

SECTION VIII.

Prop. VIII. *The demoniacs of the New Testament are not different from those mentioned in other antient authors; and a like judgment is to be formed of both.*

THAT the demoniacs of the Gospel are the same sort of persons with those mentioned by other antient writers, appears from the symptoms of their disorders,

* See Whitby's General Preface, p. 26—32. and Stillingfleet's Orig. Sacr. p. 166. Ode de Angelis, p. 649—656, and p. 867, 868.

† Mede, p. 30, observes, that the energumeni are often mentioned in the church liturgies, in the antient canons, and in other ecclesiastical writings, many ages after our Saviour's being on earth; and this not as any rare and unaccustomed thing, but as *ordinary and usual*. This is a fact so well known, that none, I presume, will controvert it.

which

which are in both the same*. Some of the New Testament demoniacs are melancholy, and frequent solitary places; others are outrageous, and not to be kept within bounds. Their understandings are disturbed; and yet, in some cases, they speak and act as if they were in their senses. Some of them are subject to fits (during which their reason is lost) and to convulsive agitations; and they act altogether as persons who have no command over themselves. Their imagination being disordered, they believe themselves to be possessed, (agreeably to the opinions concerning demons then entertained) and their speech and behaviour correspond to these apprehensions. In a word, all their symptoms agree with those of epileptics and maniacs, who fancied they had evil spirits within them. Now such as these are the demoniacs we meet with amongst the antient Greeks and Romans.

The language, likewise, in which demoniacs in the New Testament are described, is the very same with that used in describing those in other writings. When they are first seized with the fore-mentioned symptoms, a demon or demons are said to *enter* them. During the continuance of those symptoms, they are considered as actually *possessed* by demons. When they were cured, the demon or demons were said to *leave* them, or to be *expelled* from them. Now, if the demoniacs of the Gospel, and those in other

* The circumstances usually alleged to prove, that there was something preternatural in the case of the New Testament demoniacs, will be explained in the second chapter.

antient

antient authors, are described in the same terms, and have the same symptoms, why should not a like judgment be formed of both?

Some, however, make a great distinction between the demoniacs of the New Testament and all other demoniacs, calling the former real demoniacs, and the latter only reputed ones. "The antients," says the bishop of Gloucester*, "often mistook natural disorders for demoniacal." He contends, that, "in order to form a right judgment of the Gospel demoniacs, believers should first of all consider *what part the devil bore in the œconomy of grace*†. He requires us to take into the account the history of the *fall*, Christ's temptations in the wilderness, and the great end of his mission, the redemption of mankind‡." He blames those who reason "upon the case of the demoniacs, not as it is recorded by the evangelists, but as if described only in a treatise of medicine,—and as much unconnected with our holy religion, as it was with the various systems of paganism. Whereas demoniacal possessions," he adds, "have an intimate relation to the doctrine of redemption, and were therefore reasonably to be expected at the promulgation of the Gospel. This sets the matter," he thinks, "on quite a different footing§."

* P. 222.

† His lordship's very words are, *Now, to form a right judgment of the matter in question, believers should first of all consider*, WHAT PART THE DEVIL BORE IN THE ŒCONOMY OF GRACE. Serm. vol. iii. p. 215.

‡ See p. 215, 216, 217. 219, 220.

§ P. 229.

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In these passages, his lordship supposes, 1. That the agency of demons had no kind of connection with any of the systems of paganism; which is as true as it would be to affirm, that a house hath no kind of connection with the foundation on which it is raised. The entire system of paganism is erected upon the basis of demonism. All their worship was more immediately directed to demons; and from their power and influence every blessing was expected; 2. His lordship's argument farther supposes, that the doctrine of demoniacal possessions bears an intimate relation to that of man's redemption. But may not man be redeemed from sin, and misery, and the grave, unless the souls of dead men are allowed to enter and torment the bodies of the living, and to deprive them of their understandings? His lordship, indeed, is pleased to take it for granted, that demons are fallen angels; and that the devil, their head, bore a part in the œconomy of grace. Whatever part the devil may bear in his lordship's system, Christians will assign the œconomy of grace a *divine* origin; they will, with all possible gratitude, ascribe it wholly to God, whose wisdom alone planned it, and whose omnipotent goodness carried it into execution. Whatever opinion we form concerning the malignant influence of fallen angels upon the morals and happiness of mankind, it hath no relation at all to the present question, which concerns only the agency of a different order of beings, that of human spirits. 'His lordship's principle failing him, the conclusion he drawn from

from it, "that we are not to reason concerning the Gospel demoniacs as we do concerning those described in treatises of medicine," must fall to the ground.

Accordingly we find, that the New Testament doth not suppose a difference between the demoniacs in the age of Christ and other demoniacs; much less doth it point out any clear marks of distinction between them. Such marks of distinction, however, the Gospel ought to have pointed out, if there be indeed any real difference between the demoniacs there described, and all others; especially if it be true (as we are told it is) *that the antients often mistook natural disorders for demoniacal*. How comes it to pass, that neither our Saviour nor the apostles took care to guard mankind against falling into an error, on a subject which, according to the bishop of Gloucester, bears an intimate relation to the doctrine of redemption? Our modern writers upon demonology have laid down rules* for distinguishing true from pretended possessions, such as speaking in unknown tongues, revealing secrets, and foretelling future events. But neither are these rules nor those of his lordship given us in the Gospel; and we are left (with much wisdom, I apprehend) to judge of possessions as we do of all the other disorders relieved

* See Cudworth's Intell. Syst. p. 704, 705, and Jortin's Rem. on Eccles. Hist. vol. i. p. 19. According to Plato, (if we may rely on Clemens Alexandrinus, Strom. i. 405, Oxon. ed.) it was not the inspired or possessed person himself, but the demon in him who spake by his voice. Id. p. 17.

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by Christ, by the nature of the case itself. You might as reasonably affirm, that the lame, the blind, the deaf, the dumb, or the persons afflicted with fevers, palsies, and leprosies, who were cured by Christ, were different from those labouring under the same bodily defects or disorders, in other countries and in other ages, as affirm this concerning demoniacs. And thus you would destroy the evidence of the Gospel arising from Christ's miraculous cures.

Now, if the demoniacs of the New Testament are the same sort of persons with those mentioned in other writings, (as they certainly were, if we are to judge of both by the symptoms of their disorders, and the language in which they are described,) why should these disorders be ascribed to different causes? We have no reason to believe that the human system is not, in all countries and at all times, equally governed by the same laws. Why then should we ascribe the same effects (viz. maniacal and epileptic disorders) to a supernatural cause in Judea, in the time of Christ, and to a natural cause in all other places, and even in Judea, at all other times? The agency of demons should be admitted in both cases, or in neither.

SECTION IX.

Prop. IX. *There is no sufficient evidence from* REASON *for the reality of demoniacal possessions; nay, reason strongly remonstrates against it.*

It hath never yet been proved from reason, that the spirits of dead men have power to enter and torment the living; to govern their bodily organs in as perfect a manner as their own souls can do; to deprive them of their understandings, and to render them blind, deaf, and dumb. Reason shews us that they have no such power*. Nay, the advocates of possessions do now admit, that it is highly absurd to ascribe this power to the spirits of *dead men*. On this account it is, that they labour strenuously to prove, that by demons we are to understand *fallen angels*. The light of nature, however, discovers not the existence of fallen angels, much less doth it furnish certain evidence of their power to take possession of mankind in the manner explained above. Nor are angels concerned in the present question; or any spirits, except those which once dwelt in flesh and blood, as we have shewn already. And if what has been urged to prove, that the possessing demons had once been men, be just; it will, I apprehend, be allowed by all, that there never was a real demoniac.

It may be farther observed, that whoever the demons of the antients were, it hath not hitherto been

* Dissertation on Miracles, p. 161, 8vo edit. or 101, 12mo edit.

proved

proved by reason, that the disorders imputed to them cannot proceed from natural causes. You say, that, by the sole operation of these causes, you cannot account for the epilepsy and madness. What then? Will it necessarily follow from hence, that these disorders proceed from a cause that is supernatural? Are you perfectly acquainted with all the secrets of nature, or with all her wonderful operations in the human system? Do not very many of them escape the most diligent search? Why then do men, however learned, pronounce with certainty, that epileptic and maniacal disorders do not fall within the limits of nature? We are subject to *other* disorders in the common course of nature, or according to those fixed rules by which the human system is governed; why then may we not be subject to *these* also in the same manner? If we cannot affirm with certainty, that they *do* proceed from natural causes; neither can you prove, that they *do not*. There is, therefore, no evidence from reason, for the reality of possessions.

Those who first invented this doctrine were men unacquainted with nature, and yet ambitious of accounting for its most mysterious phænomena. At the same time they were possessed with an high opinion of the power of their gods; and thus they were easily induced to ascribe to their influence distempers in general, and those especially which they could not account for in a natural way, or were attended with extraordinary symptoms. Indeed, there was no disease, nor any event whatever, that, according to the heathens, had not originally some ruling deity. The

symptoms

symptoms of demoniacs and epileptics seemed to them to argue the immediate presence of demons in the human body, actuating all its organs, and occupying the seat of the human soul. But these things serve only to shew their ignorance, their presumption, and their superstition. Whatever is agreeable to their inclinations and prejudices, mankind are, in every age, too much disposed to admit without proof. And errors, (as many have observed,) however absurd, introduced in times of gross darkness, afterwards become venerable and sacred for their antiquity; and, by the sole force of education and habit, maintain themselves against the light of reason and the improvements of science. Lucian charges even the philosophers with great credulity; nor doth he except those whose learning and age attracted the highest veneration. *They differ,* says he, *from children only in their grey hairs and long beards, and are even more easy to be deceived than they**.

On the other hand, those persons whose minds were not disturbed by superstitious terrors, and who gained an insight into nature, pronounced what commonly passed for demoniacal possessions, to be mere natural disorders. This was the case not only with the Sadducees and the Epicureans, but also with the Peripatetics. Aristotle, who was the founder of their sect, and who is justly styled the prince of the philo-

* Μονα τα ωλια, και τα γενεια διαφερουσι των βρεφων. τα δε αλλα, και αυτους εκεινων ευαγωγοτερους προς το ψευδος. Lucian's Philopseud. Oper. vol. ii. p. 342. ed. Amstelodam.

sophers,

sophers, denied the existence of demons *; and maintained †, that what is called possession is the effect of melancholy. The divine Hippocrates, equally eminent for his piety and judgment, wrote a book to shew ‡, that the epilepsy had nothing in it supernatural more than any other distemper; and to expose the ignorance and impiety of those who ascribed it to the immediate agency of the gods, and accordingly undertook to cure it by expiations and charms. Celsus §, when treating of the several kinds of madness, takes no notice of demoniacal possession, and ascribes them to different causes. The madness of Ajax and Orestes is by him imputed to false images, and not to the gods, as it is by the poets. Plotinus ‖, (who flourished in the third century,) though a Platonic philosopher, speaks of those who pretended to cure diseases by expelling demons, *as admired only by the vulgar*, while they were despised by men of sense, who believed *that all diseases proceed from natural causes.* From Origen ¶, in the same century, we learn, that physicians in his time accounted, in a natural way, for those disorders which were imputed to demons,

* Metaphys. lib. xii. et iii. de anima.

† In his Problems.

‡ Περι Ἱερης Νοσου, p. 301. ed. Foesii, Genevæ, 1657. He says, p. 303. το δε νουσημα τουτο, ουδεν τι μοι δοκεει θειοτερον ειναι των λοιπων, αλλα φυσιν μεν εχει, την και τα αλλα νουσηματα. See also p. 310.

§ Lib. iii. cap. 18.

‖ Ennead. 2. lib. ix. cap. 14.

¶ In Matt. tom. 13. vol. i. p. 311. Huet. vol. iii. p. 577, Bened. cited by Dr. Lardner, Case of the Demoniacs, p. 86.

though

though he himself, a less proper judge, condemned them for so doing. Philostorgius also *, at the beginning of the fifth century, blames Posidonius (whom he celebrates as the most eminent physician of his age) for asserting, that *madness was not owing to the impulse of demons, but to a redundancy of peccant humours.* I omit many great authorities, because they have been produced by others †. And it seems not improbable, that the reality of possessions was doubted by many who, through too much caution, never publicly expressed their doubts; and that, like Dio Chrysostom ‡, in discoursing of demons, they rather proposed the sentiments of others than their own. However this may be, it is known to every one, that since the improvements of science in later times, the most able and judicious physicians have confirmed by their suffrages the opinion of the most learned and judicious amongst the antients upon the subject before us. To take no notice of Dr. Freind §,

* Eccles. Hist. lib. viii. cap. 10. Λεγειν δ' αυτον ὁμως ουκ ορθως, ουχι δαιμονων επιθεσει τους ανθρωπους εκπεπληχθαι, ὑγρων δε τινων κακοχυμιαν το παθος εργαζεσθαι. Posidonius farther taught, μηδε γαρ εἰναι το παραπαν ισχυν δαιμονων, ανθρωπων φυσιν επηρεαζουσαν. Neque enim dæmonum vim ullam esse, quæ hominum genus vexaret. Dr. Lardner, p. 87, conjectures that Posidonius was a Christian.

† The learned Wetstein, in his Comment. on Matt. iv. 24, p. 282, 283, hath cited several eminent physicians, who disapproved the doctrine of real possessions, whose testimonies are here omitted. See also his citations from P. Egineta and Sext. Empiricus, p. 281.

‡ Orat. 23. Ὁπως δε χρη δαιμονιον τι πονηρον ἡγεισθαι, και αδικον, και ανηκεστον, ουκ εχω ειπειν—αλλ' ἐγω νυν ου κατα την εμαυτου δοξαν διειλεγμαι τα πολλα—αλλα κατα την των πολλων ανθρωπων.

§ History of Physic, part i. p. 18—21.

and other ingenious writers, the authority alone of our illustrious countryman, Dr. R. Mead, should have more weight with us than the opinion of multitudes bred up in ignorance and superstition. This celebrated writer hath proved, that the circumstances related of the Gospel demoniacs are symptoms of natural disorders, and do not exceed the power of physical causes *.

Waving all authority, let us attend to such matters of fact as are obvious even to those whose profession does not oblige them to study the animal system. We have seen that the reality of possessions cannot be demonstrated by reason, because the disorders imputed to them *may proceed* from natural causes; and it cannot be proved that they do not. I now add, that reason remonstrates against the doctrine of possessions, and clearly shews us, that the disorders imputed to them *actually do proceed* from natural causes. The temperament of the body, the texture of the brain, the motion of the blood, the excess or defect of the animal spirits, the influences of air and diet, intenseness of thought, violent passions, and sudden frights, will disturb or destroy the regular exercise of the understanding. It is matter of common observation, that what renders the spirits too volatile causes the raving species of madness; and what depresses them, the melancholy. What is here observed concerning maniacal is equally true with respect to epi-

* Insanorum hæc sunt omnia—Nihil profecto hic sacrum, nihil, quod ex male affecta corporis sanitate oriri non possit, reperimus. Medica Sacra, cap. ix. p. 66, 67. See also his preface.

leptical

leptical distempers. Various considerations are urged by Hippocrates* to shew that the epilepsy may be accounted for without having recourse to any extraordinary interposition of the gods. I shall take notice of one, both because it lies level to every capacity, and because it hath, I believe, been omitted by the several learned writers upon possessions, who have appealed to the authority of this most able and judicious physician. *Goats*, he observes, *are remarkably subject to the epilepsy; and, on dissecting the head, the brain is found to be overcharged with a rheum of a very bad smell; a plain proof*, he adds, *that the animal was diseased, not possessed by a deity* †. Now, if maniacal and epileptical distempers owe their rise to natural causes; and (so far as reason can judge) to these causes only; it is not only groundless, but absurd, to ascribe them to a supernatural influence.

In order to weaken the force of this argument, it hath been said by some, that demons mix with the morbid matter‡; and by others, that an evil spirit could not disturb the human frame, *without occasioning some or other of the symptoms which accompany natural diseases* §; and that, in order to prove the truth of the Gospel demonianism, we need only to urge the testimony of the Gospel ‖. But this reply, instead of

* De Morbo Sacro, p. 303. 307, 308, 309, 310.

† Ην δακοψης την κεφαλην εδησεις την εγκεφαλον ὑγρον εοντα, και ιδροντες περιπλεων, και κακον οζοντα, και εν τουτο δηλοιτε γνωσει, ὁτι ουχ ὁ Θεος το σωμα λυμαινεται, αλλ' ἡ νοσος. P. 307.

‡ Nye on Natural and Revealed Religion, p. 213.

§ Bp. Warburton, p. 235.

‖ P. 236.

weakening

weakening our argument, is a plain confession of its force; it admits that demoniacs are diseased; that the symptoms of demoniacal diseases are the same as those in natural ones; and consequently that, as far as we can judge by the light of reason, what is called possession is a mere natural disease. It may be objected, that what is here allowed by the advocates for the demoniac system, is merely that possessions may be accompanied *with some* of the symptoms of natural diseases. I answer, that no other symptoms than these are mentioned concerning the Gospel demoniacs. In the case of the epileptic youth, (for example) though largely described, what one symptom is there that doth not agree with the falling-sickness *? With regard to the testimony of the Gospel, it is a point that will be examined hereafter.

As the several disorders imputed to possession proceed from natural causes, like other disorders allowed not to be preternatural; so, like these, they yield to natural remedies †, and each of them requires a peculiar process. The antients ‡, in their treatment of persons

* P. Ægineta, iii. 13. De Morbo comitiali: Morbus comitialis convulsio est totius corporis, cum principalium actionum læsione. Fit hæc affectio maxime pueris,—postea vero etiam adolescentibus et in vigore consistentibus, minime autem adultis et senibus.—Instante vero jam symptomate, collapsio ipsis derepente contingit, et convulsio, et quandoque nihil significans exclamatio. Præcipuum vero ipsorum signum est oris spuma, quum reliqua etiam aliis morbis quodammodo sint communia. Wetstein on Mark ix. 18. See the same learned writer on Matt. xvii. 15.

† With regard to the epilepsy, see Hippocrates, p. 310.

‡ Aristotle de Mirabil. Συντελει δε και τοις δαιμονι τινι γενομενοις κατοχοις.

persons supposed to be possessed, applied a great variety of medicines, according to the different symptoms of the patient. And our modern* physicians, besides medicines, recommend bleeding, blistering, purging, shaving. But what effect can medicines and evacuations have upon the devil, who is conceived to be spiritual and incorporeal? Why should it be thought that the same evil spirit is expelled from the body of *one* person, by medicines that would not affect him in the body of *another?* or, that he is sometimes driven away by hellebore, at other times drawn off by a blister? If physicians are able, by such vari-

κατοχοις, ἁμα γαρ τω προσθηναι ταις ῥισιν, απερχεται το δαιμονιον. Aristotle, or whoever was the author of this book, is speaking of a stone which grows in the river Nile, concerning which Plutarch says (De Fluviis p. 1159, D.) ποιει δε προς τους δαιμονιζομενους, ἁμα γαρ προσττεθηναι ταις ῥισιν, απερχεται το δαιμονιον. See Joseph. Antiq. lib. viii. cap. 2. § 5. et de Bel. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 6. § 3. Tobit. chap. vi. and viii. Plaut. Menæch. Act. ii. sc. 2. 4, 5. Act. v. sc. 4. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xxv. cap. 24. lib. xxvii. cap. 83. lib. xxviii. cap. 16. lib. xxix. cap. 4. lib. xxx. cap. 10. lib. xxxvii. cap. 3, 4. Plotinus, Ennead. ii. 9. 14.—Apuleius, de Virtut. Herbar. 10. de Artemisia, says, Fugat et dæmonia. —And, in xix. 6. Si infans *contristatus* fuerit, herba Aristolochia suffumigabis infantem, hilarem facit et convalescit infans, fugato dæmonio.

The antients thought that possessions might be procured as well as removed by natural means: Ibi in potando necessarius modus, ne lymphatos agat, Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xxxi. cap. 5. Thalasseglen circa Indum amnem inveniri:—hac pota lymphari homines, observantibus miraculis. Theangelida in Libano Syriæ,—qua pota magi divinent. Id. lib. xxiv. cap. 102. p. 352. ed. Harduin. Now, is it not more likely that certain waters and herbs should disorder the animal system, than that they should control the devil?

* Shaw's Practice of Physic, vol. i. p. 26. Mead's Medica Sacra, cap. 9.

ous

ous means, to eject him from the human body, the devil is subject to man, not man to the devil. What absurdities will not some persons run into, rather than allow what seems self-evident, that disorders which both proceed from natural causes and are cured or relieved by natural remedies, are no other than natural disorders?

All the arguments from reason, elsewhere * urged against any superior created spirits possessing the power of working miracles or producing any effect in our system, contrary to the general rules by which it is governed, conclude here. But I shall only observe, that in every part of the world that falls under our observation, we see *a fixed order* of causes and effects, such as is not disturbed by any invisible beings; and the preservation of this order seems essential to the happiness of the creation. May we not from hence conclude, that the human system in particular is governed in the same manner, and subject to invariable laws, such as none but God can control †?

Are we to take it for granted, that God will suffer these laws to be controled merely for the sake of subjecting the healths, the understandings, and the lives of mankind, even those of the tenderest age ‡, and of eminent piety §, to the caprice and malice of evil spi-

* Dissertation on Miracles, passim.

† If it did not follow from hence that there never were any real demoniacs in the world, yet it would follow that they are as common now as they ever were, which few, if any, will assert.

‡ Mark ix. 21.

§ Luke xiii. 16.

rits? This is a point not to be admitted without the strongest evidence; so repugnant doth it appear to all our ideas of the equity, goodness, and mercy of the gracious Parent of mankind*. Now, if reason shews us that there is, and must be, a fixed order of causes and effects throughout the whole system of nature; and that both the generation and cure of the diseases in question are the effects of this constitution; then reason doth certainly remonstrate against ascribing them to supernatural causes; which is the point we undertook to prove.

Nor let any think this a point of small importance. Not to mention here the many other† inconveniences attending the belief of our being in the power of any superior malevolent spirits, this belief hath a direct tendency to subvert the foundation of natural piety, and to beget idolatry and superstition‡. These, we are certain, were the effects which this belief produced among the heathens. They endeavoured (as it was natural for them to do) to appease the anger of the demons to whom they attributed their diseases; and to them they applied for a cure§. The Jews themselves,

* It has been said that the diseases ascribed to possessions are the very same, whether they proceed from natural causes or the agency of demons. But if malicious demons had the power of possessing mankind, we should soon find a fatal difference in our condition.

† Dissertation on Miracles, chap. ii. sect. 4.

‡ Id. p. 100, 8vo. edit., and p. 63, 12mo.

§ Morbos tum ad iram deorum immortalium relatos esse, et ab iisdem opem posci solitam. Celsus Prefat. See also Hippocrates de Morbo Sacro, the introduction; and Homer's Odyss. lib. v. ver. 394—397.

when

when they adopted the pagan system of demonology, offered sacrifices to Sammael, to prevent him from accusing them to God for their sins*. Endless superstitions hath the doctrine of possessions generated amongst Christians, especially in the darkest ages of the church. Fascination and witchcraft then made a capital article of religion. According to the account given us by historians, "nothing was to be seen but priests driving out devils from those who were said to be possessed. The courts of justice, composed of magistrates who ought to have had more understanding than the vulgar, were employed in trying witches and sorcerers, who were found guilty upon the pretended evidence of the devils†."

Is this a history of creatures who boast of being rational? Their Maker had endued them with the faculty of reason, but they had neglected to cultivate it; they were taught to think it impious to use it and to try doctrines by it; evident as it is that there is no other principle in our frame that can enable us to distinguish between truth and falsehood. It can be no matter of surprise to us, that the doctrine of posses-

* Buxtorf in voc. Sammael, or Dissertation on Miracles, p. 103, 8vo. edit., and p. 64. 12mo.

† I shall mention one instance, which may serve as a specimen of the rest. Urban Grandier, the curate and canon of Loudun, was found guilty of exercising the black art (for which he was burnt alive), upon the evidence of the following devils: Astaroth (a devil of the order of the seraphims, and chief of the possessing devils); Easas, Celsus, Acaos, Eudon, Asmodeus (of the order of the thrones); Alex, Zabulon, Nephtalim, Cham, Uriel, Achas (of the order of the principalities). See the General Dictionary, under the articles URBAN GRANDIER and LOUDUN.

sions, though totally unsupported by reason, though contrary to the clearest principles of it, contrary to all we know concerning the order of nature, and the perfections of its Author, to the certain evidence we have, that the reputed effects of supernatural possession are in reality the effects of natural causes; it cannot be matter of surprise to us, that this doctrine, however absurd, should be too generally received by men who made no more use of their reason than if they had none.

Great occasion have we to be thankful to God, that, in proportion to the degree in which men cultivate their reason, study nature, the animal system in particular, and become concerned to yield assent only to evidence, and to assert the honour of the divine administration, the destructive doctrine we are opposing sinks into contempt. The light of the Gospel, at its first appearance, exposed the folly of all the magic arts*. And so it did when it shone forth a second time at the reformation from popery. At this glorious æra, reason, which had long been enslaved by the most debasing superstitions, recovered some degree of her proper influence, and began to reject the idle stories of witchcraft, possessions, exorcisms, which had been propagated by artful and interested impostors, and adopted by the credulous part of mankind.

It is needless to pursue this point any farther, inasmuch as the ablest advocates for the demoniac system, from a conviction of its absurdity, contend only for

* Acts xix. 18—20.

the

the reality of the possessions which are taken notice of in Scripture; and rest their belief of those possessions upon the authority of Scripture. We shall therefore proceed to examine the sentiments of the sacred writers on this subject.

SECTION X.

Prop. x. ***The doctrine of demoniacal possessions, instead of being supported by the Jewish or Christian revelation, is utterly subverted by both.***

THIS is a point of the greatest importance, and therefore deserves to be fully considered. Here I would observe,

I. That whether the doctrine of possessions be true or false, it was not originally founded on revelation; nor did it ever receive the sanction of any of the prophets either of the Old or New Testament.

With regard to the prophets of the Old Testament, they stand clear from all suspicion of countenancing the doctrine of real possessions. It is not pretended that they ever expressly taught it. In all their writings no traces of it are to be found, no mention of a single instance of reputed possession, nor any allusion to it. For, with regard to Saul, of whom we read, that *an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him**, it is sufficient to observe, that the word *spirit* is often ap-

* 1 Sam. xvi. 14. xviii. 10.

plied to the *temper and affections* of the human mind *; and that the Jews were wont to call all kinds of melancholy *an evil spirit* †. Saul's disorder, therefore, was a deep melancholy. This appears, not only from the language in which it is described, but also from the history of its cure; for it was not cured by prayer, but by music; a proper method of exhilarating the animal spirits, though not of expelling demons. Some, indeed, have inferred from the case of Elisha, *on whom the hand of the Lord came when the minstrel played* ‡, that music, if it was a natural means of inviting a *good* spirit into men, might prove as effectual in driving out a *bad* one. But the only use of music in this case was to compose the spirit of the prophet, which had been disturbed by anger, and thereby unfitted to receive divine influence and inspiration.

There were several occasions, on which it is natural to suppose some mention of the doctrine of possessions would have been made in the Old Testament, if it had been revealed to the antient prophets. On this supposition, who would not expect, in the history of their miraculous cures, to read of their expelling de-

* See Numb. v. 14. Psal. li. 10. Isa. xxxvii. 7. 36, 37. Ezek. xviii. 31. Hosea iv. 12. v. 4. Luke ix. 55. Rom. viii. 15. 2 Tim. i. 7. In Judg. ix. 23, *an evil spirit* denotes a spirit of discord. In Hos. xii. 1, the Septuagint calls the falsehood and treachery of the Israelites πονηρον πνευμα, a *wicked spirit* or *disposition*.

† Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. in Luc. xiii. 11. Maimonides in Sabbat. ii. 5.

‡ 2 Kings iii. 15.

mons?

mons*? So likewise, when Moses prescribed the means of being purified from the defilement of natural disorders, is it not strange that he appointed no method of being cleansed from the defilement even of a *diabolical possession?* The pagan religion provided many rites of purification for those who were possessed by demons, the gods of that religion †. Now, if Moses knew these gods to be the devil and his angels, and that they possessed mankind, would it not have been judged necessary by this prophet, and highly desirable by the Israelites, that some rites of purification should be appointed for those who were inhabited by such impure infernal spirits? Is not a *diabolical* possession more contaminating than the *leprosy* and other *merely corporeal disorders?* Nevertheless, though many rites and sacrifices were appointed in order to cleanse persons from the latter, not the least notice is taken of the former.

It is more extraordinary still, that the Old Testament prophets, though they foretel the peculiar glories of the Messiah, describe those extraordinary gifts of the spirit which he bestowed upon his followers, and the miracles which he himself performed; though they specify his other supernatural cures, his giving

* In Deut. xxviii. God threatens to punish the Israelites in case they disobeyed his laws, as with other evils, so with various diseases, and particularly with *madness* (v. 28), the very disease usually imputed to the possession of demons. Nevertheless, there is no intimation here given of the existence and power of such evil spirits, much as it would have been to the purpose of Moses to have made mention of them.

† See Hippocrates de Morbo Sacro.

sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, feet to the lame, and health to the diseased *, have taken no notice of what is supposed to be one of the chief glories of the Messiah, and more extraordinary than any miraculous cure of mere bodily disorders, his ejecting demons, and enabling his followers to do the same. The proper inference from hence seems to be, that what is called the ejection of demons is the cure of a natural disorder, and is included in Christ's restoring the diseased to health; especially as our Saviour, when applying to himself the prophecies concerning his miracles †, doth not specify the ejection of demons, though at that very time, *he cured many of evil spirits* ‡. Accordingly, we find in fact, that the evangelists § have included reputed possessions under those natural maladies, which the prophets foretold Christ should heal. Were there any thing supernatural in what is called possession, would the prophets of God have been inspired to foretel the Messiah's cure of natural disorders, and not of those which were supernatural? Be this, however, as it will, it must be allowed that the Old Testament is *silent* on the subject of possessions, and cannot be employed to establish their reality.

* Isa. xxix. 18. xxxv. 5, 6. liii. 4.

† Matt. xi. 4, 5.

‡ Luke vii. 21.

§ *They brought unto him many that were possessed with demons, and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet,* (chap. liii. 4.) *Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses,* Matt. viii. 16, 17. See above, sect. iv. p. 38, &c.

With

With regard to the prophets of the New Testament, it must, I apprehend, likewise be allowed, that they were not *the original authors* of the doctrine of possessions. In Chaldea, in Egypt, in Greece, and all other countries, the doctrine of demons generally prevailed from the earliest ages*. From the Gentiles it was derived to the Jews, not at Babylon only, but in every other place of their dispersion, and even in Judea itself. We need no other proof than the New Testament, that the doctrine of demons, and (what was grounded upon it) that of demoniacal possessions, were common both amongst Jews and Gentiles in our Saviour's time; as was shewn above†. Indeed, both the language and sentiments of mankind concerning possessions, were formed long before our Saviour's appearance in the world. Nor can any thing argue a greater ignorance of antiquity, than to treat this doctrine as one of the peculiar discoveries of the Gospel of Christ. Whether the doctrine be true or false, it doth not appear to have been originally founded on

* The Magi amongst the Chaldeans taught that the air was full of spectres, ειδωλων πληρη ειναι τον αερα. Diogen. Laert. Proem. segm. 7. From Diodorus Siculus (lib. i. p. 12. ed. Rhodomani), it appears that the doctrine of demons was entertained in Egypt. Pythagoras maintained, *that the air was full of souls, and that these were what were deemed to be demons and heroes,* Ειναι παντα των αερα ψυχων εμπλεων και τουτους δαιμονας τε και ηρωας νομιζεσθαι. Diog. Laert. Pythag. lib. viii. § 31. Thales (Id. lib. i. § 27.) Pythagoras (Id. lib. viii. § 32.) Heraclitus (Id. lib. ix. § 7.) Plato and the Stoics taught *that all things were full of demons.* Plat. Conviv. p. 119. Plutarch de Placit. Philos. lib. i. cap. 8.) See also Varro apud August. de Civ. Dei, lib. vii. cap. 6.

† P. 83. See also Matt. xii. 27. Acts xix. 13. 19.

revelation. We may, without fear of being contradicted by the records of antiquity, pronounce it to be the invention of human imagination. Indeed, at first sight it clearly appears to be the genuine offspring of pagan superstition.

Some, however, may be ready to object, that though the doctrine of possessions was not first introduced by Christ or his apostles; yet that it received the sanction of their authority. To those who raise this objection, we are not backward to make the following concession, "That our Saviour in performing, and the evangelists in recording, the cure of demoniacs, do use those modes of expression which were common in the age and country in which they lived." It will be our business, in the sequel*, to shew that they did not hereby give their sanction to the hypothesis concerning demons, on which those modes of expression were originally built. In this place I would only observe, that when they are professedly stating and explaining the Christian revelation, they never assert the reality of demoniacal possessions, or represent it as a part of that doctrine which they were immediately instructed and commissioned by Heaven to publish and confirm. This is a fact which cannot be denied; nor can it be accounted for on any other supposition, than that the doctrine of possessions made no part of that revelation which they received from God. This doctrine is not only unsupported by revelation, but contradicted by it. For,

II. It is inconsistent with the fundamental prin-

* Chap. II. sect. iii.

ciple

ciple both of the Jewish and Christian dispensations, with the proper evidence of miracles in general, and with the nature of that miracle in particular, which was performed upon demoniacs.

The grand principle which runs through the whole Jewish dispensation is *, that Jehovah is the one true God, that he is sole Creator and Sovereign of the world, which he governs by fixed and invariable laws, and that no superior beings whatever, besides God, are able to control those laws, or that course and order of events which he established. Accordingly, the Old Testament refers to the immediate and miraculous agency of God alone all those effects which are contrary to that order. The Christian dispensation proceeds upon the same principle; and farther teaches, that as there is but one God, so there is but one Mediator† between God and man, to whom any power or authority over mankind is delegated, and who, indeed, hath all power both in heaven and earth given unto him. Now, if there be no sovereign of nature but God, and no Mediator between God and man but Christ; there can be no other superior intelligences who have any power over the laws of nature, or over the human system in particular. Indeed, there could be no law of nature, no fixed constitution of things, either respecting the world in general, or the human system in particular, if the order of that constitution might be disturbed at the pleasure of malignant spirits.

* Dissertation on Miracles, chap. III. sect. 5.

† Id. sect. vi. p. 404, 8vo. edit., and p. 259, 12mo.

With

With regard to the *evidence* of the Jewish and Christian revelations, it arises from the miraculous testimony borne to them by God. And whoever considers the true nature of miracles, (under which denomination we are to include all effects produced in the system of nature, contrary to the general rules by which it is governed) and the use which the Scripture makes of them, urging them as absolute proofs of the sole dominion of Jehovah over universal nature*, and of the divinity of the mission and doctrine of his prophets†; whoever duly considers these things, will naturally infer from them the utter impotence of demons to produce any effects in any part of the system of nature, contrary to that order which God hath established in it. For such effects, could they be produced by demons, would not be, what the Scripture represents them, decisive, infallible tests of a divine interposition. But I forbear to pursue this argument any farther in this place, as there will be occasion to resume it in the sequel‡, when we shall point out some particular miracles, the credit and authority of which necessarily suppose the utter inability of demons to possess mankind in the manner in which they are commonly said to do so.

I shall only observe here that the very miracles performed upon those who were called demoniacs, serve to shew that they were not really possessed. Those, indeed, who assert that there were real demoniacs in the age of Christ, triumph in the miracles performed

* Dissertation on Miracles, chap. iii. sect. 5.

† Id. chap. iii. sect. 6. ‡ Chap. iii.

upon

upon them, as highly useful to demonstrate the inferiority of evil demons to that beneficent Power which rules the universe, and their subjection to the Son of God. But the Gentiles themselves never considered demons as rivals of the supreme Divinity, but rather supposed they derived their power and authority from the celestial gods, and acted in subserviency to their designs*. From the evangelic history itself, it appears that the Jews thought Beelzebub able to control all other demons as his subjects, and to expel them from the bodies of men. What good end then could be answered by proving what Gentiles and Jews were ready to acknowledge, that demons were inferior to the supreme numen; and that Christ had equal power with Beelzebub? Can we disparage that great miracle, the cure of demoniacs, in a more effectual manner, than by representing it as wrought with such intentions as these?

It was performed with the same general design as all the other miracles of the Gospel; and it seems to me to contain in its own nature, a proof peculiar to itself of the absolute nullity of demons, and thereby a confutation of the doctrine of possessions. If demons possess mankind, they must do it either by their own *natural* power, or by a power *supernatural* and *miraculous*, occasionally imparted to them by God for that purpose. That they do not possess mankind by

* See Plato in Sympos. p. 202. tom. iii. ed Serrani. Apuleius (De Deo Socratis, p. 675. ed. Delph.) says, Cuncta cœlestium voluntate et numine et auctoritate, sed dæmonum obsequio et operâ et ministerio fieri arbitrandum est.

a *mira-*

a *miraculous* and *divine* power, seems evident from hence, that in this case the Deity must contradict himself, and counteract his own power in casting them out. Nor is it reasonable to suppose that demons have a *natural power* of possessing mankind. It must here be remembered, that reputed demoniacs, when they were cured by Christ, were restored to a perfect and *permanent* state of sanity. Now, if demons have a natural power of entering the bodies of mankind, why did they not return to those bodies from which they were ejected? Was a return to them more difficult than their entrance into them at first? If you affirm that they were *perpetually restrained by God* from exercising their natural power of re-entering the bodies from which they had been expelled; you affirm more than you can support by any positive proof, and what is in itself very improbable; for demons cannot be restrained from using their natural powers without a *miracle*, a *perpetual miracle*. Now doth reason or doth revelation warrant the expectation of such an extraordinary and continued interposition of the divine power in any case? Is it credible that God should bestow and continue powers to any of his creatures, which he always, or almost always, restrains them from using? The only just inference, therefore, that can be drawn from the perfect and lasting cure of a reputed demoniac is, that demons had never possessed him, and that the disorder imputed to their possession was a natural one. We will not take any farther pains to shew how certainly the impotence of demons may

be

be *inferred* from the leading principle of revelation, and the proofs by which it was established. For,

III. All the prophets of God, in every age, when professedly delivering their divine messages to mankind, have with one voice proclaimed the utter impotence of demons; and hereby entirely subverted the doctrine of demoniacal possessions.

It is, I apprehend, a point in which all are agreed, and which is capable of the clearest proof, that by demons in Scripture, we are to understand the heathen deities. It is the name by which those deities, such of them especially as were the more immediate objects of public worship, are described by the heathens themselves*. By this name they are described in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament †. In still later writings of the Jews, the Apocrypha, they are called by the same name ‡; and the New Testament affirms that the heathens *sacrificed to demons* §. With respect to Beelzebub, the prince of demons, in particular, it hath been shewn already ||, that he was the god of Ekron. It is still, however, a matter in dispute, whether the heathen gods or demons were considered by the sacred writers as the spirits of deified men and women, or as apostate angels. If you allow that the Scripture represents them as such dead men and women as superstition deified, you must allow

* Dissertation on Miracles, chap. iii. sect. 2. and Wolfius on Acts xvii. 18. p. 1253.

† Deut. xxxii. 17. Ps. xcvi. 6. Ps. cvi. 37,

‡ Baruch iv. 7.

§ 1 Cor. x. 20, 21, compared with ver. 19. 7. 14.

|| See above, p. 19.

that

that the Scripture hath overturned the doctrine of possessions, by giving us such an account of the state of the dead, as can never be reconciled with the supposition of their having power over the bodies of the living*. If, on the other hand, you maintain, that demons are not of human origin, we lose, indeed, one argument against possessions with which the Scripture supplies us; but it is an argument that, however conclusive, is not wanted.

For, whoever the heathen demons or deities were, whether *human* or *angelic* spirits, they are all, without exception, branded in Scripture, as being utterly void of all power to do either good or evil to mankind. Very many passages to this purpose, both from the Old and New Testament, have been produced in a former publication†; and for this reason are here omitted. So very clear and determinate is the language of Scripture on this point, that all the wit, and learning, and zeal of those who contend for the reality of the possessions and prodigies ascribed to the heathen gods, have not yet been able to devise any method of evading the argument against their power, drawn from the Scripture representation of them, but by supposing that, though the heathen gods themselves were mere nullities, yet powerful evil spirits personated them, and performed in their names those very things which the heathens ascribed to their gods; and that, in reality, these evil spirits were the gods they worshipped. How groundless and absurd, as well as

* Dissertation on Miracles, p. 161, 8vo. edit., and p. 101, 12mo.

† Id. p. 233, 8vo. edit., and p. 148, 12mo.

how

how reproachful to the prophets of God this supposition is, we have elsewhere shewn *.

That I may not repeat what occurs there with respect to the Scripture idea of the heathen gods or demons, I will here only examine the account given of them in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. In their heathen state, as the apostle reminds them, they had worshipped *dumb idols* †. Upon their embracing the Gospel, most ‡ of them were so perfectly convinced of the absolute nullity of all their former gods, that they pleaded this as an excuse for assisting at festivals in their honour. To these persons St. Paul thus addresses himself: *We know that an idol is nothing in the world; and that there is none other god but one* §, Strong prejudices, aided by great parts, having prevented many from discerning the meaning of this plain passage, it will be necessary to examine it with some attention. It may be observed,

1. That by *an idol*, we are here to understand *a heathen demon or deity*, and not (as some apprehend) the mere *image* or *statue* which represented him. The image or statue abstractedly considered, was regarded by all Heathens, no less than by all Christians, as a mere mass of senseless matter: what distinguished the latter from the former was, a belief of the nullity of the deities themselves. Indeed, the original word,

* Dissertation on Miracles, p. 240, 8vo. edit., and p. 152, 12mo.

† 1 Cor. xii. 2.

‡ 1 Cor. viii. 1. *We know that we ALL have knowledge*, πανες, i. e. pars maxima nostrum, Grot.

§ 1 Cor. viii. 4.

which

which we render *idol**, and which signifies an *image* or *representation* of things in the mind, is very frequently applied by the Greeks (to whom St. Paul is here writing) to *ghosts* or *spectres*, which were supposed to appear in the likeness, or to be an image and representation of their former bodies†. Hence they employed this term to describe their demons‡, who were the ghosts or images of dead men. Regarding their gods as deified human ghosts, they call them indifferently *idols* and *demons*§. By the Jews also, as appears from the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, these two words are used as equivalent‖.

That St. Paul, by *an idol*, must here mean a heathen demon or deity, appears not only from the ordinary signification of the word, but also from his opposing

* Εἴδωλον.

† The reader may find ample proofs of this point in Le Clerc and Elsner, on 1 Cor. viii. 4. in the latter writer especially. See also Wolfius in loc.

‡ Philostratus, in giving an account of the demoniac on whose behalf his mother applied for relief to the Indian sages, says, that the demon declared he was εἴδωλον ἀνδρὸς, *the ghost of a man*. And the letter written to this demon, to drive him away from the demoniac, runs thus: ἡ ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς τὸ εἴδωλον, epistola ad spectrum, Vit. Apollonii, lib. iii. cap. 38. p. 128. In another place (lib. iv. cap. 20. p. 157.) δαίμων and εἴδωλον are used as equivalent terms, in reference to a person possessed, ὁ δαίμων ἐλαύνει σε.—φανεὶς ἤφίει τὸ εἴδωλον.

§ Εἴδωλα γοῦν εἰκότως αὐτοὺς, καὶ δαίμονας ὑμεῖς αὐτοὶ κεκλήκατε. Merito igitur vos ipsi idola et dæmonas eos vocatis. Clemens Alexandr. Cohort. ad Gent. p. 49. ed Potteri.

‖ This appears by comparing Ps. xcvi. 5, πάντες οἱ θεοὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν δαιμόνια, with 1 Chron. xvi. 26, πάντες οἱ θεοὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν εἴδωλα. In Deut. xxxii. 17, (which will be cited at large below) the heathen gods are called *demons*, and in the 21st verse they are called *idols*.

the

the idol to the *true God*, and inferring the nullity of the idol from there being but *one God* *. What in one place he calls *idols*, he in other places calls *gods*, *lords* †, and *demons* ‡. These are the subject of the apostle's discourse; and there is no pertinence or propriety in any thing he advances concerning idols, if you do not understand thereby the demons or deities of the Gentiles. His whole argument relates to *things offered in sacrifice unto idols* §. Could he then by idols mean mere statues? Was it not to their demons or gods that the heathens offered sacrifice? Doth not the apostle himself say, *They sacrificed to demons* ‖? Could he then mean any thing different from these by idols? The following passage deserves particular consideration: *If any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in* THE IDOLS' TEMPLE, *shall not the conscience of him that is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols* ¶? It seems impossible to reconcile St. Paul either with himself or with common sense, if he be not here speaking of the temple and sacrifices of the heathen gods. It may be added, that the apostle supposes that a Christian whose faith in the Gospel was not established, might, *with conscience of the idol, eat of the sacrifice as a thing offered unto*

* 1 Cor. viii. 4, 5, 6. In like manner he opposes idols (false gods) to the true God, 2 Cor. vi. 16. *What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?* that is, with demons or false gods, worshipped by the heathens.

† 1 Cor. viii. 5.
‡ 1 Cor. x. 20.
§ 1 Cor. viii. 4.
‖ 1 Cor. x. 20.
¶ 1 Cor. viii. 10.

an idol *; he likewise supposes, that a heathen might say, *This is offered in sacrifice to idols* †. Now, had the Christian any reverence for what he knew to be mere wood or stone? and would the heathen represent the object of his devotion as nothing but such senseless matter?

For the several foregoing reasons, we must by idols here understand the heathen demons or deities, those very deities whom the Corinthians had worshipped in their Gentile state, and whom St. Paul himself, on other occasions, describes under the same term ‡.

Nothing but the great importance of it could justify our enlarging upon a point so very evident as this. If by idols the apostle meant demons, then what he affirms concerning the former, must be equally true concerning the latter. And it is merely for the sake of avoiding this conclusion, that some have denied the principle from which it is drawn, and maintained, that, by idols, the apostle intended not the heathen demons, but their images and statues.

2. The idols or demons here spoken of were not *devils* (in the sense in which that word is now com-

* 1 Cor. viii. 7. † 1 Cor. x. 28.

‡ *Ye turned from idols*, that is, from false gods, *to serve the living and true God*, 1 Thess. i. 9. He tells the Corinthians, 1 Cor. xii. 2. *Ye were carried away to these dumb idols.* Εἰδωλα ἀφωνα vocat Apostolus, nam vocem quamvis conarentur edere non poterant. Virgilius, lib. vi. v. 492.

——————Pars tollere vocem
Exiguam: inceptus clamor frustratur hiantes.

Elsner on 1 Cor. viii. 4.

monly

monly used), but such human spirits as the Gentiles deified. We read, indeed, in the English translation, *The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils**. This is the passage which is so frequently urged as a full proof that the heathen deities were not the ghosts of dead men, but spirits of a higher order. The argument, however, is founded on a false translation of this passage, which makes not the least mention of *devils*; the word thus rendered being, in the original, quite different from this, namely demons †. Now, how doth it appear, that by demons, the apostle meant devils? It is said to appear from hence, that the word *demon* is sometimes used in an *ill* sense. What then? If the heathens had evil as well as good demons, will it follow from hence, that demons were apostate angels? By no means; as we have shewn elsewhere ‡. It is not even certain that the apostle uses the word here in a bad sense §. This, however, is

* 1 Cor. x. 20. † Δαιμονιοις.

‡ Dissertation on Miracles, p. 208, 8vo. edit., and p. 129, 12mo.

§ Mr. Mede, (p. 636, of his works) seems to have thought that demons might be taken in a good sense, in 1 Cor. x. 21. Nor is it any just objection against this opinion, that Porphyry (De abstinent. lib. ii. § 36, 37, and in the citation by Le Clerc, on 1 Cor. x. 20.) and some other philosophers use the word in an ill sense. For the apostle is not here stating the opinion of particular philosophers, but describing the objects of *popular* worship, and speaking of the notion which the heathens in general had of them: *they sacrifice to demons*, that is, to spirits whom they regard as real deities. I readily acknowledge, however, that the heathens had evil as well as good demons; and that the public worship supposed some of them to be evil. But this is far from proving that these demons had not once been

is a matter of no importance. The question is not whether the spirits here spoken of were good or bad; but whether they were the spirits of dead men or devils.

If it can be proved, that demons most usually denoted amongst the Greeks (to whom St. Paul is writing) such spirits as are commonly meant by devils; that this also is the known sense in which St. Paul and the rest of the apostles use it in all other places; and that it best suits the occasion on which it is used here: in this case it must be allowed, that our translators had good reason for making him speak of devils. But if the very reverse of all this be true, we shall be fully justified in rejecting their interpretation.

With regard to the *Greeks*, it is a fact not to be disputed, that amongst them demons (in whatever singular sense some particular philosophers might use

been men and women. How immoral were the characters, and how licentious was the worship of those gods that were certainly of human extract, such as Jupiter, Venus, Bacchus, and many others? Osiris or Serapis was the chief of evil demons; Plutarch, p. 362. tom. ii. To these there may be a reference in 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15, 16. particularly in that expression, *What concord hath Christ with Belial?* The heathen demons might be called *Belial*, either because they were of no use, or because so much wickedness entered into the idea which the pagans entertained of them. Belial ex בלי non, nihil, et יעל quod in Hiphil notat prodesse; secundum R. Davidem notans inutilem. According to Drusius in loc. Hominem nequam non male quis vocet. There may be, however, no reference here to the heathen gods at all, whether they were deified ghosts or not; the word Belial being often applied to living men; and it being the general design of the apostle in this place, to dissuade Christians from suffering themselves to be drawn into any thing criminal by the heathens. Vide Grot. in loc.

it) did, in common language, generally, if not universally, denote *deities*; *those* deities whom the heathens worshipped, who were not devils, but human spirits*. From

* In confirmation of what is urged elsewhere (Dissertation on Miracles, chap. iii. sect. 2.) to prove that by demons the Greeks understood deified human spirits, we may add a passage from Herodotus, cited by Raphelius, on 1 Cor. x. 20. Την δε δαιμονα ταυτην τη θυουσι, λεγουσι αυτοι Ταυροι Ιφιγενειαν την Αγαμεμνονος ειναι. Dæmonem autem hanc cui immolant, ipsi Tauri aiunt esse Iphigeniam, Agamemnonis filiam. Stobæus, (Eclog. lib. i. p. 128.) and Maximus Tyrius, (Diss. xxvii. ed. Oxon. p. 326.) cited by Ode, p. 185, 186, speak of the conversion of human souls into demons, after their departure from the body. The same author observes, that in the Sibylline Oracles (lib. viii. p. 684. ed. Gallæi) Rome is reproached with worshipping

Δαιμονα; αψυχους, νεκρων ειδωλα καμοντων.
Manes exanimos, idola mortuorum sepultorum.

This passage confirms what was observed above, that idols and demons are equivalent terms, and justifies the use made of them by St. Paul. Tatian (in Orat. contra Græcos, p. m. 148.) having enumerated many of the heathen gods, and exposed their characters, says, Τοιουτοι τινες εισιν οι δαιμονες, αυτοι οι την ειμαρμενην ωρισαν. Hujusmodi quidam sunt dii (dæmones) qui fatum determinarunt. Eusebius speaks of a temple dedicated αισχρω δαιμονι Αφροδιτης, impuro Veneris numini. De Laudibus Constantini, lib. iii. cap. 55. See also lib. iii. cap. 26. where Venus is called a lascivious *demon*. Ode, De Angelis, p. 191. cites these passages, amongst many others, to shew that the Fathers of the Christian church gave the title of demons to the heathen gods. And they prove more than this, viz. that they gave this title to those gods that were known to be of human extract. The same author, in the forecited place, says that Eusebius (Vit. Constantini, lib. iii. cap. 56.) calls Æsculapius *the demon of the Cilicians*, (τον των Κιλικων δαιμονα,) though he himself did not allow him to be either a *demon* or *a god*, (that is, in the sense in which he was thought such by the Cilicians,) but *an impostor*, ου δαιμων, ουδε γε θεος. Πλανος δε τις ψυχων. By *the demon of the Cilicians*, Eusebius did not mean Æsculapius himself, but a spirit

that

From St. Paul's acquaintance with the Greek learning, we may infer that he could not be ignorant of the ordinary signification of demons among the Greeks. Nay, it is certain in fact, that he did know that the Greeks by this word expressed gods taken from among men. For, after preaching to the Athenians concerning the resurrection and glory of Jesus Christ, they represented him as *a setter forth of strange demons**, or *gods*, as our translators have here rendered the word; being themselves sensible, that in this place it must necessarily signify deified men. Now,

that lurked in his temple, and personated him. It is evident, however, from Eusebius's denying this spirit to be a demon, or deified human ghost, that the Gentiles regarded Æsculapius as such.

I cannot omit a remarkable passage in Clemens Alexandrinus, because it strongly confirms the account here given of the sense in which demons were understood by the Greeks. Αυτικα οι εμπειροι του λογου, κατα τας ιδρυσεις εν πολλοις των ιερων, και σχεδον πασας τας θηκας των κατεχομενων ενιδρυσαντο. δαιμονας μεν τας τουτων ψυχας καλουντες, θρησκευεσθαι δε προς ανθρωπων διδασκοντες, ως αν εξουσιαν λαζουσας δια καθαροτητα του βιου, τη θεια προνοια, εις την ανθρωπων λειτουργιαν, των περιγειων περιπολειν τοπων. Jam vero qui sunt eorum doctrinæ periti, in multis templis tanquam deorum statuas, omnes fere mortuorum loculos posuere, dæmones quidem vocantes eorum animas, eas autem coli ab hominibus docentes, ut quæ divina providentia propter vitæ puritatem potestatem acceperint, ut ad hominum ministerium locum qui est circa terram obirent. The temples of the Greeks were the tombs or sepulchres of their gods. Hence it is said of Christians, (in Minut. Fel. cap. viii. p. 50. ed. Davis.) Templa ut busta despiciunt. And Tertullian (de Spectac. cap. xiii.) says, Dum mortui et dii unum sunt, utraque idololatriâ abstinemus, nec minus templa quam monumenta despuimus. Now St. Paul is speaking of those gods who had temples erected to their honour, and consequently of such as were dead men.

* Acts xvii. 18. 22. Dissertation on Miracles, p. 203, 8vo edit.; and p. 129, 12mo.

is it not more likely that St. Paul, in writing to the inhabitants of Greece, would use the word in the common and ordinary signification of it among that people, in which he knew they used it, and would understand him in using it; than that he should, without giving any notice, assign it a different meaning, to which they were not accustomed?

We are next to inquire, whether it was well known to Christians, not excepting those newly converted to the faith, that demons denoted devils, when used by *St. Paul and the rest of the apostles?* What a late writer* hath copied from others hath been advanced so long and so often, that it seems to have obtained general credit, viz. that whatever notion the Gentiles had of demons, *the sacred writers never use the word (and they use it often) but they always mean Satan and his angels.* It was not merely by the Gentiles, but by the Jews also, and (as we shall shew in the sequel) particularly by the authors of the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, (which is so often followed by the writers of the New,) that demon is employed to describe a human spirit. This alone is sufficient to persuade an unprejudiced mind, that the New Testament writers use the word in the same sense; till some proof of the contrary be produced, none having yet been offered. The Scripture speaks of no more than one devil, and never confounds him with demons†. For the fuller satisfaction of the

* Bp. Warburton, Serm. vol. ii. p. 70. note (z).

† See above, p. 8.

reader, we will take notice of all the occasions on which this word is used in the New Testament. It occurs there above fifty times in reference to possessions; and we have shewn above *, that when used in this connexion, whether by the sacred writers or others, it constantly denotes a human ghost. On other occasions it occurs more rarely. I will set down all the places in which we meet with it when it hath no direct reference to possessions, and in their proper order. 1. When St. Paul, in his address to the Athenians †, calls them *very devout towards demons* ‡, or *the gods*, could he design to brand them as worshippers of *devils?* Would a person of his politeness, and who always studied a respectful and engaging address, open his discourse at Athens in so shocking a manner §? Besides, he could not affirm with truth, that the Athenians were worshippers of devils. Nor would the Athenians understand him as using the word in this sense, it being, as he well knew, very different from theirs, when they represented him as *a*

* P. 13. 25.

† Acts xvii. 22.

‡ Δεισιδαιμονεστερους. See Mede's Apostacy of the latter Times. Δεισιδαιμων, though it be often used to describe a person that is *superstitious*, doth also often mean one that is *religious* and *devout*, and is opposed to the parcus deorum cultor, spoken of in Horace. Δεισιδαιμονια is also frequently put for *religion*, and is used in a good sense, not only by the heathens (see Budæus), but also by the Jews who spoke the Greek language. See Joseph. Ant. lib. x. cap. 8. § 2. and other places cited by Krebsius, in his Observat. in Nov. Test. e Josepho, p. 232.

§ See Dr. Lardner's Credibility, vol. i. p. 253. 2d ed.

setter

*setter forth of strange demons**.—2. The next place in which we meet with this word is in the passage in question†, where, as we shall shew when we come to consider its scope and connexion, it must signify the heathen deities, that is, dead men.—3. St. Paul, in his Epistle to Timothy, when foretelling the apostacy of some professing Christians from the purity of the original faith, amongst several other instances, specifies this very remarkable one, *their giving heed to doctrines* (not of devils, but) *concerning demons*‡. The apostle here must refer to the worship of *saints*, practised by idolatrous Christians, as we have shewn elsewhere §. This is allowed by the most learned and judicious interpreters among protestants, and is asserted even by that celebrated author ‖, who so positively declares, in express contradiction to himself, that "the sacred writers never use the word demons but they *always* mean Satan and his angels." This passage is the more remarkable, as it shews how this word was used by St. Paul; and that he thereby did not mean devils, but beatified or deified human spirits. Now, is not St. Paul the best interpreter of himself? If he be, ought we not to explain the word in his Epistle to the Corinthians, in a sense conformable to that which it is allowed to

* Acts xvii. 18. See above, p. 122.

† 1 Cor. x. 20.

‡ 1 Tim. iv. 1.

§ Dissertation on Miracles, p. 167. 204, 8vo edit., and p. 105. 130, 12mo.

‖ Bp. Warburton, after citing this prophecy, adds, *In which words, the Holy Spirit graphically describes the worship of SAINTS*, Serm. vol. iii. p. 302.

bear in his Epistle to Timothy; especially as it is no where else to be found in all his writings, but in the places here noticed?—4. St. James says, *The devils* (in the original, *the demons**) *believe and tremble.* I do not remember to have seen it observed by any writer, (and therefore I submit the observation entirely to the judgment of others,) that this passage is taken from one in the book of Job†, which we unhappily render, *Dead things are formed from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof;* but which may more properly be translated, *The giants*‡ *tremble*

* Τα δαιμονια. Jam. ii. 19.

† Chap. xxvi. 5.

‡ הרפאים, *the rephaim.* This word sometimes signifies *the ghosts of the dead* in general. *Wilt thou shew wonders to* (*methim*) *the dead? Shall the dead* (*rephaim, ghosts*) *arise and praise thee?* Ps. lxxxviii. 10. When Isaiah is foretelling the destruction of the oppressors of God's church, he speaks of it as a thing already accomplished in the following terms, *They are dead; they shall not live; they are deceased* (*rephaim, ghosts*); *they shall not rise,* chap. xxvi. 14. In the following passages it seems to denote the ghosts of *wicked men* in particular, who are in a state of perdition; and more especially, perhaps, those of *the giants,* who perished by the flood, and such as like them filled the earth with violence and terror. In Prov. ii. 18. we read, that *the house of the adulteress inclineth unto death, and her paths unto* (*rephaim*) *the giants*; that is, to the wretched society of those rebellious spirits who corrupted the old world. And in chap. ix. 18. it is said of the person that frequents her house, *He knoweth not that the dead* (*rephaim, the giants*) *are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell*; he doth not consider that lewd and vicious courses sink men into the very bottom of the infernal region, to keep company with the apostate giants. Again, we are warned by Solomon, Prov. xxi. 16. *The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of* (*rephaim*) *giants*; he shall be confined to the company of those great apostates from virtue, who, for their licentiousness,

tremble under the waters†*, (or *in the abyss,*) *together with their host‡*, or *fellow inhabitants.* Job is here celebrating the dominion of God over the mansions of the dead; and he affirms that the *giants*, the souls of those mighty men who were such a terror to the

ness, were swept away with a deluge. See Mr. Mede's Disc. on this text (Works, p. 31.) The prophet Isaiah, (chap. xiv. 9.) when foretelling the destruction of Babylon, represents the infernal regions as being in great commotion at the approach of its monarch: *Hell from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead (the rephaim* or *giants) for thee; even all the chief ones of the earth: it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.* Compare Ezek. xxxii. 18. 21. Rephaim properly signifies *giants*, in Gen. xiv. 5. Deut. ii. 11. 20. iii. 11. Josh. xv. 8. xvii. 15. 2 Samuel xxi. 16. 18. 20. 22. 1 Chron. xx. 4. 6. 8. In the passage from Job now before us, it is explained concerning giants, that is, their ghosts, in the Chaldee Paraphrase, the Septuagint, the Latin Vulgate, and many modern versions.

* יְחוֹלָלוּ, which the learned Schultens here renders *intremiscunt*, and the Latin Vulgate, *gemunt.* Our English translation renders the same verb *to fear*, 1 Chron. xvi. 30. *to shake*, Ps. xxix. 8. *to tremble*, Ps. cxiv. 7. Ps. xcvii. 4. Jerem. v. 22. Hab. iii. 10. and often *to grieve* and *be in anguish.*

† *Under the waters.* Mr. Peters, in his excellent Dissertation on Job, (p. 359) and others suppose that Job here refers to the waters with which the giants were overwhelmed at the flood. Compare Mede, p. 31, &c. But the ingenious Mr. Scott, in his judicious notes on this passage, observes from Windet, De Vita Functorum Statu, p. 243. that the Jewish rabbis placed gehenna under those waters, which they supposed to be lower than the earth.

‡ *Host.* The original word was thus understood by the Chaldee Paraphrast. It rather denotes either their *inhabitants*, or their *neighbours* and *fellows.* But it is immaterial to determine whether it refers to those wicked men who dwelt on the earth at the same time with the giants, (as some explain the word;) or (as others) to those who have been since gathered to their assembly.

old world, and perished by the deluge, do now tremble in the infernal regions, together with those who were once their contemporaries on earth, or that now inhabit the same mansions*. That the Jews thought that Job here referred to wicked ghosts, to the ghosts especially of the antient giants, clearly appears from the Chaldee Paraphrase †, and from the Septuagint ‡. The words, however, may be understood in a more general sense to the following effect: "The departed souls of the wicked tremble in *the lowest sheol* §, even all the inhabitants of those gloomy mansions ‖." Now the demons of St. James answer to these departed souls in Job, whether you understand thereby the ghosts of the wicked in general, or those of the antediluvian giants in particular. For demons denoted the ghosts of wicked men ¶, of such especially as

* The explication given above of the text in question agrees well with the succeeding verse: *Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.* Job. xxvi. 6. Is not this explication also more agreeable to the design of Job, which was to extol the unlimited power of the Divine Being, than that given by the Septuagint, the Targum, and some learned moderns, which seems to set limits to that power? *Can the giants be born or brought forth again from under the waters?*

† דגבריא. Compare Gen. xv. 20. in Hebrew, with the Targum.

‡ Γιγαντες. Symmachus renders it Στομαχοι.

§ The expression in Job, *under the waters*, answers to the *lowest hell*, or *sheol*, in Deut. xxxii. 22. See Peters on Job, sect. 8. and Windet, p. 204. And though *rephaim*, as we have seen, sometimes signifies ghosts in general, yet it is evident that Job is speaking of that part of sheol which is allotted to wicked souls.

‖ Compare Schultens on Job, p. 708.

¶ Demons bore this meaning amongst the Jews. See Josephus as cited above, p. 25. and Dissertation on Miracles, p. 208, 8vo. 132, 12mo.

suffered

suffered a violent death*, and particularly those destroyed by the flood, who were considered as the worst kind of demons†. So that the apostle seems only to have translated this passage of Job, when he said, *The demons tremble.* As to the additional circumstance of their *believing*, mentioned in the translation, it is clearly implied in the original; a dread of God's justice being inconsistent with a disbelief of his existence. I add, that St. James doth not appear to be delivering any new doctrine concerning demons in this place, but rather to be arguing with the persons to whom he writes, upon their own principles, or appealing to a fact that they would not dispute, because established upon the authority of the Old Testament. *Thou believest that there is one God,* and so far *thou dost well:* but this faith alone is not sufficient; for *the demons also believe and tremble.* In reasoning with Jews, or with Jewish converts, what was more natural than to employ a principle allowed by themselves‡, and contained in their own Scriptures? It is the more reasonable to suppose that the text in question is borrowed

* Dissertation on Miracles, p. 209. 229, 8vo edit., p. 133. 146, 12mo.

† Αι των γιγαντων ψυχαι, οι περι τον κοσμον εισι πλανωμενοι δαιμονες. Athenag. Apol. p. 28. B. Tertullian says, (Apol. cap. xxii.) De angelis quibusdam (he is speaking of the sons of God in Gen. vi. 2.) *corruptior gens* dæmonum evaserit.

‡ That the antient Jews understood the forecited passage from Job, so far as St. James employs it, in the same sense that he did, (as well as in what seems to me to be the true sense,) appears from the Chaldee Paraphrase, which may be thus literally rendered: *Can the giants that tremble,* &c. See p. 127, 128.

from these writings, as the immediately succeeding arguments from the case of Abraham and of Rahab are certainly drawn from thence. If the foregoing observations are just, this passage is a clear proof that by demons in the New Testament we are sometimes to understand the ghosts of dead men.—5. It can bear no other meaning in that prophecy of St. John *, *The rest of the men, which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons* †, *and idols of gold and silver*. This passage refers to the idolatries practised in the Roman church, which consists in the worship of departed saints and senseless idols, not of devils, as this word is now understood.—6. In the sequel of the Revelation of St. John, he had a prophetic vision of *the spirits of demons working miracles* ‡, which, as was observed above §, some refer to the miracles pretended to be wrought by departed saints, and in support of their worship. Or, according to the genius of this prophecy, *the spirits of demons working miracles* may be a symbol or figurative representation of the *deceit* and *fraud* practised by men of the temper and *spirit of demons*, in supporting their claims to a miraculous power.—Once more, 7. The utter desolation of Babylon is thus described in this book, *It is become the habitation of demons* ‖. The demons who were thought to haunt desolate places were such as were

* Rev. ix. 20. † Τα δαιμονια.

‡ Rev. xvi. 14. § P. 27.

‖ Rev. xviii. 2. With regard to the proper meaning of this passage, see below, ch. ii. sect. 3. article 2.

believed

believed to possess mankind *, and consequently were human spirits. From this distinct examination of all the occasions on which demons occur in the New Testament, we may, I presume, safely conclude, that it never means the devil and his angels there; least of all in the writings of St. Paul. On the contrary, there is as much evidence as the nature of the case admits, that both he and the other apostles by demons meant the ghosts of dead men; and they use the word, as the antients did, sometimes in a good, at other times in a bad sense. If there be any exception to the meaning here assigned it, it must be in the passage under our present consideration.

This leads us to consider, whether *the occasion* on which it is used here, obliges us to understand St. Paul as speaking of devils, though he doth not (nor do any of the other apostles) use it in any such sense at any other time. Let us then examine the subject of his discourse, and the scope of his argument, which, it will be allowed, is a good method of determining his true meaning. It is a point too obvious to admit of any dispute, that the apostle is here describing the heathen gods, such of them as were the objects of popular worship. By demons, therefore, he could not mean devils: for these spirits were not known, much less worshipped, by the heathens. Consequently it is not true that they *partook of the table of devils*, or that they *drank the cup of devils*. Nor doth St. Paul ever charge them with this crime. In the be-

* Matt. xii. 43.

ginning of his Epistle to the Romans, he particularly specifies the vile objects of their devotion, and could not, one would imagine, omit on that occasion the mention of one unspeakably viler than all the rest, had he known that the devil was included among them. The objects of established worship in the heathen world were deified men and women. Such they are allowed to be even by those Christians, who, to support a favourite hypothesis, do at times give a very different account of them *. The very names they bore shew them to be such; and as such they are represented in the theology of the Gentiles themselves †. By all the antient prophets, also ‡, the heathen gods are spoken of as dead persons. Our apostle himself entertained the same opinion of them as the prophets did. Like them, he describes Jehovah by the title of the *Living* § God, in order to distinguish him from the gods taken from amongst *mortal men*. The very same gods, whom in the place under consideration he calls demons, in the context he speaks of as *idols;* a term never applied to devils, and which

* Scimus nihil esse nisi nomina mortuorum. Tertullian. De Spectaculis. See Grotius on 1 Cor. viii. 4. and x. 20.

† Dissertation on Miracles, p. 184, 8vo edit., p. 116, 12mo. It may not be improper to observe farther, that it was St. Paul's design in the place before us to describe the view which the Gentiles themselves had of their own gods. As if he had said, "Though we know that idols are nothing, yet they regard them as real deities; and to these false deities they sacrifice, and not to God."

‡ Dissertation on Miracles, p. 197, 8vo edit., p. 125, 12mo.

§ Acts xiv. 15. 1 Thess. i. 9.

properly

properly denotes human ghosts and spectres *. So that, had the meaning of demon been in itself doubtful, had it been as frequently employed to describe the devil as a deified ghost, yet would the subject of the apostle's discourse in this place, and the connexion of the passage, clearly determine the word here to the latter meaning. But we have shewn that this meaning is the only one in which it was used by the people to whom St. Paul is writing, when it was applied to the heathen gods, and that alone which corresponds to the use of it on every other occasion by the sacred writers, and particularly by this apostle himself.

If more evidence still be required in so plain a case, it may be observed farther, that both the sentiment and language of the apostle are borrowed from passages in the Septuagint, in which demons must be understood of deities of human origin †.

3. When

* What hath been observed with regard to the heathen gods in general, is applicable more especially to those of Corinth in particular, to those very gods that the Christian converts in that city had once worshipped. Concerning these in particular they would understand the apostle to speak. Now it is allowed by the most learned opposers of the opinion concerning demons here maintained, that the gods of Corinth were of human extract. Jupiter, Apollo, Venus, Leucothea, Palæmon, homines fuerant, qui jam olim interierant. Grot. on 1 Cor. viii. 1.

† Deut. xxxii. 17. Ps. cvi. 37. From the former of these places especially, St. Paul borrowed the expression, *The Gentiles sacrifice to demons, not to God.* It hath indeed been often asserted, that by demons, in both these places of the Septuagint, we are to understand *devils.* But this is a point that hath never yet been proved. Bare assertions, how frequently soever they may be repeated, and however generally credited, are not proofs. Several reasons, on the other hand,

3. When it is said, *an idol* (that is, a heathen deity or demon) IS NOTHING IN THE WORLD; the meaning is, either that this reputed deity hath no existence

hand, have been assigned to shew, that the authors of the Septuagint did not by demons, in these places, mean devils, but deified human spirits (Dissertation on Miracles, p. 198—201, 8vo, 125—7, 12mo.); and that the Hebrew word (*schedim*) which they translate by *demons*, bears a correspondent meaning. (Id. p. 248, 8vo edit., p. 158, 12mo.) These reasons, till I see them answered, will have more weight with me than mere assertions. There is indeed sufficient evidence from the Septuagint itself, to prove that the authors of it did not, in these places, mean devils, or any powerful and mischievous spirits, but the ghosts of such dead men as the heathens deified, as appears from an examination of the context in each place. Εθυσαν δαιμονιοις, και ου Θεω· θεοις, οις ουκ ηδεισαν. καινοι και προσφατοι ηκασιν, ους ουκ ηδεισαν οι πατερες αυτων. Deut. xxxii. 17. Αυτοι παρεζηλωσαν με επ' ου Θεω, παρωξυναν με εν τοις ειδωλοις αυτων, v. 21. In these two verses, the very same persons are called, first *demons*, then *gods*, and lastly *idols*; which confirms what was observed above, that St. Paul, by these three different names, means one and the same thing. Now, if the authors of the Septuagint by demons intended devils, it is natural to ask, When did the Israelites sacrifice to devils? Why are devils called *new* gods? And why are they called *idols*? This is a word that frequently occurs in the Septuagint; but where doth it signify devils in that translation? By this word it renders הבל, which signifies *vanity*. Understand the Septuagint as speaking of new demon-gods, of men newly deified, or newly worshipped by the Israelites, of gods that were only idols, mere ghosts and images; and you make them speak consistently with themselves, and with the original Hebrew.—In like manner it may be observed with respect to Ps. cvi. 37. *All the gods of the heathens are demons*, that what are here, by the Septuagint, called demons, are called *dead men*, v. 28. (εφαγον θυσιας νεκρων,) and *carved* or *graven images*, (ειδωλευσαν τοις γλυπτοις αυτων, v. 36. εθυσαν τοις γλυπτοις Χαναν, v. 38.) Now, will you allow that devils are dead men? or that, like the heathen gods, they are either not distinct from, or of no more account than, the senseless images that represented them? Were the idols of *Canaan* devils, by way of distinction

istence in nature*; or that he hath no degree of that power his votaries ascribe to him, and is of no more account than if he did not exist†. The heathens were persuaded that their demons had real power over mankind, and that much good or evil might be expected from their interposition. Now, it was in direct opposition to these sentiments of the heathens concerning their gods, that this maxim was advanced, *An idol is nothing in the world.* It must therefore be designed to express either their not having any real existence, or their having no more influence on the affairs of mankind than a metaphysical non-entity. The use which some of the Christians at Corinth made of this maxim, confirms the explication here given of it. For they pleaded it as a reason for feasting in his temple upon what had been offered in sacrifice to the idol, or false god, though he was supposed by his worshippers to mingle with and to par-

distinction from those of other countries? You avoid these and many other difficulties, only by allowing that the Seventy interpreters use demons in its most common signification, for such dead men as the heathens deified, and the Canaanites worshipped with human sacrifices. Dissertation on Miracles, p. 249, 8vo edit., p. 158, 12mo.

* *Idolum re ipsâ non subsistit:* quod verum erat de diis illis Corinthiis. Grotius on 1 Cor. viii. 1.

† See Raphelius, Wolfius, Schmidius, and Krebsius on 1 Cor. viii. 4. This passage may receive some illustration from chap. x. 19. *What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?* The thing offered in sacrifice neither receives sanctity nor pollution from its being offered; nor is this a circumstance in itself of the least moment. The idol itself is equally insignificant.

take-

take of the victim*. The Corinthian converts joined their idolatrous acquaintance in these religious banquets, under a full persuasion that the idol could not pollute them, nor do any thing either to the prejudice or benefit of mankind†. St. Paul, who (as will be shewn immediately) adopted this maxim, used it in the sense here assigned it; for he elsewhere censures all the demons of gentilism as mere *vanities*‡. It seems, indeed, to be borrowed from the Old Testament, where it cannot bear (as all allow) any other sense than that in which it is here explained. *All the gods of the heathens are nothings*§. *Behold, ye are of no-*

* That the heathens often feasted upon the sacrifices in their temples, and that the gods were thought to take their part in the entertainment, is shewn by Cudworth on the Lord's Supper, (see Mosheim's edition) Whitby and Wetstein on 1 Cor. x. 20, 21. and Elsner on this place, and on 1 Cor. viii. 10.

† Hence it appears that those writers must be mistaken, who suppose that this maxim, *An idol is nothing in the world*, means no more than that an idol is not the true God, or hath no proper divinity in him. For, though an idol were not the true God, yet might he be *something in the world*, he might have much of that power his votaries ascribe to him, and his favour or displeasure might be a matter of great importance. Nevertheless, the reverse of all this was supposed to be true by those who adopted this maxim. They reasoned in the following manner: Quod non est contaminare animum non potest. Nihil ergo in eo peccati si in templo epuler, si ad exta vocatus eam, si post prosecta in focum data mensæ accumbam. Grotius on 1 Cor. viii. 1.

‡ Acts xiv. 15. In 1 Cor. xii. 2. the apostle calls them *dumb idols*. How well this agrees to human ghosts may be seen in Elsner, cited above, p. 118, note ‡.

§ *Elilim*, *nothings*, or things of no value. Ps. xcvi. 5.

thing,

thing, and your work of nought. They cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good†.*

4. When St. Paul says, *WE KNOW that an idol is nothing*; the expression implies, that the nullity of the heathen gods or demons was a principle admitted by himself, as well as entertained by those Christians whom he was now addressing. *There was not,* indeed, *in all* the Christians at Corinth *this knowledge‡.* For some of the new converts were not able to shake off all at once their old opinion concerning the power of their former gods, or at least not to efface the impression of it from their hearts: and consequently these persons, in partaking of what had been offered in sacrifice to the heathen gods, would feel some degree of their former religious reverence and awe of them, and seem to themselves to be joining with them in one common feast§. It was far otherwise, however, with the major part of the Christian church, with those especially of more enlarged understandings and a liberal turn of mind, or who were more fully instructed and established in the doctrines of christianity. So strongly were they persuaded that *an idol was nothing in the world,* that under the shelter of this principle *they did sit at meat in the idol's temple*‖, and partook of the consecrated feast as a common and or-

* Isa. xli. 24. See also v. 29.

† Jerem. x. 5.

‡ 1 Cor. viii. 7.

§ *For some with conscience of the idol, unto this hour, eat it as a thing offered unto an idol, and their conscience being weak is defiled.* 1 Cor. viii. 7.

‖ 1 Cor. viii. 10.

dinary

dinary repast. They seem even to have valued themselves greatly upon this conduct, as a proof of the uncommon strength and freedom of their minds. Now, when St. Paul tells these persons, WE KNOW *that an idol is nothing*; he plainly admits the truth of the principle upon which they acted, and indirectly reproves their vanity in boasting of their knowledge of it, as if they were in this respect singularly wise*. As if the apostle had said, "Though you are puffed up with your knowledge of the nullity of idols, and are so forward to shew it; this is no peculiar discovery of yours; I and all well-instructed Christians are as perfectly acquainted with it as you can be†." It is very

* Hence it is, that when he enters upon the argument concerning things offered to idols, he says, *We know that we all have knowledge*, 1 Cor. viii. 1. where Grotius observes, Ne isti ὑπερηφανεύονται putent se solos sapere, non minùs et nos intelligimus quid sit idolum sive deus commentitius. See also Mr. Locke on 1 Cor. viii. 1—13. who paraphrases v. 4. in the following manner, *I know as well as you, that an idol*, &c.

† The bishop of Gloucester (Serm. vol. ii. p. 71.) says, *Admitting that the Christians concerned had no thought of receiving good or harm from those idols, yet (what is more to the purpose) we see St. Paul had.* But it is clear from the passage we are now considering, that St. Paul agreed in sentiment with the Christians concerned, that idols were nothing in the world, and consequently that no good or harm could be expected from them. His lordship had before (p. 69.) represented St. Paul as saying *that these idols were devils.* Now, if these idols were devils, it would from hence follow, that devils are nothing in the world; a consequence that his lordship will not allow, and which cannot be drawn from the nullity of demons. His lordship, however, is at no loss to solve the difficulty; for he supposes (p. 71.) the apostle's meaning to be, *Though ye can possibly receive no benefit from*

very remarkable that, notwithstanding the ill use made of this principle, he not only admits it to be true, but labours to establish it.

5. This brings us to examine the reasoning employed by the apostle to prove the nullity of idols, and at the same time to prevent the abuse of this doctrine: *We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. FOR though there be* (amongst the Gentiles) *that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth,* both celestial and terrestrial; (*as there be gods MANY, and lords MANY**; that is, there is indeed amongst the Gentiles *a vast multitude* of reputed deities, some *sovereign* in their respective provinces, and others *subordinate,* but all of them supposed to possess real power and dominion). *But to US* (that is, to Christians)

from idols, (by which he affirms St. Paul meaned *devils,*) *as your protectors and benefactors, ye may yet receive real damage from the devil, the declared enemy of mankind.* According to this account of idols, they were *something.* Yet this writer, in the same breath, says, (p. 70.) *The good and evil demons of Gentilism were indeed those idols, not of the altar but of the brain, which the sacred writers esteemed metaphysical NOTHINGS.* Can St. Paul be speaking of any other demons than those of the Gentiles, when he says, *The Gentiles sacrifice to demons?* Now, if the demons of Gentilism were the idols which the sacred writers esteemed nothing in the world, why doth his lordship affirm that these idols are devils, and that we may receive damage from them?

* Le Clerc supposes that Paul here asserts that there are gods many (in heaven God and his angels); and lords many (in the earth magistrates): a sentiment quite foreign from the design of the apostle, and well refuted by Whitby on 1 Cor. viii. 5. Compare Jerem. ii. 28.

there

there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. As if the apostle had said, "All Christians, if they think rightly, must allow that the good and evil demons of paganism are mere nullities, for this plain reason, that our religion supposes and asserts the sole dominion of Jehovah and his Messiah over the human race; and, in so doing, utterly subverts the claims of all other superior beings to interpose in human affairs. If demons have any power over mankind, whether it be original or subordinate, or can do them either good or evil, it cannot be truly affirmed that they have no other God or Lord but Jehovah and his Christ, *from whom* or *through whom* are all things: for, on this supposition, it might be said with truth, that *from* or *through* demons *are many things*, and that they are *something in the world*. We cannot therefore but agree with you in your main principle, that demons are nothing, unless we renounce the fundamental article of the Christian faith."

Such was his zeal for this principle, that when warning those Christians against the abuse of it, who urged it as a plea for eating things offered to the heathen demons, and even for assisting at festivals in their honour, he thus expresseth himself*: *What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?* "Earnestly as I am dissuading you against joining with the hea-

* 1 Cor. x. 19.

thens

thens in the sacrifices or festivals of their demons, far be it from me to suggest that these demons have any degree of power, or that what is offered to them suffers any real pollution. After what I have said on this subject, you cannot suspect me of holding any such opinion." *But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with demons.* "My meaning is, that the worship of the heathens is not directed to the true God, but to their own deities, whom they substitute in his stead, and whom they regard as real deities: and it must be very unfit for Christians, who know that they are nothing in the world, and that there is only one God, to join in the worship and communion of false gods*; or to do any act that, by fair construction, implies their having a religious reverence for them, a belief of their power, or a desire of their favour and friendship†. The apostle proceeds, *Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and the table of demons.* "You cannot, without great absurdity and self-contradiction, pay homage to Christ as the only Lord over mankind, by celebrating his supper, if you acknowledge the authority of other lords and agents be-

* With this the Corinthian converts were justly chargeable, when they assisted at the sacrifices of the heathen gods, or partook of the sacred banquets in their temples; the gods themselves, as it was supposed, sharing in the common feast.

† The same sentiment is elsewhere thus expressed by the apostle, *What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?* 2 Cor. vi. 16.

tween heaven and earth, and celebrate festivals in their honour. If you acknowledge their claims, you must deny his; if you admit his, you must give up theirs *."

The apostle urges several other considerations to dissuade them from eating promiscuously, and without scruple, things offered to false gods; but as they are chiefly drawn from the ill effects that their example might have upon others, who might be tempted to imitate it, though not fully persuaded of the lawfulness of doing it, they need not be explained in this place. It is very observable, that, copiously as the apostle treats this subject, he never once makes any mention of the devil; never intimates that he or any mischievous spirits personated the heathen gods, supported their worship, and were themselves, in reality, the gods of the heathens; though, had he thought this to be the case, it would have been much to his purpose to have clearly and fully stated it, in order to give proper force to his argument against celebrating festivals in their honour. The whole reasoning of St. Paul concerns the idols and demons of the Gentiles, those spirits whom they regarded as gods and lords; and whoever they were, the apostle hath not urged one argument against eating things sacrificed to them, that supposes or implies their having any

* The apostle in like manner taxes the Colossians (chap. ii. 19.) with *not holding the head*, because *they worshipped angels*. For though they might allow Christ to be the *chief mediator*, yet they utterly subverted his proper claim to be the *sole* mediator between God and man.

degree

degree of power; but urges quite different considerations, drawn from the circumstances under which some Christians partook of those sacrifices, which might make it an act of religious honour and worship, or might prove a stumbling-block to their weak brethren. He grants that things offered in sacrifice to the heathen demons underwent no change; and that no man was either better or worse for partaking or not partaking of them. He also admits that the demons themselves were mere nothing; and (knowing that some Christians at that time were disposed to ascribe a real power to these demons, and probably foreseeing the same disposition in others, in after ages,) shews that the nullity of demons was a just and necessary inference from that fundamental article of Christianity, there being but one God and one Lord over mankind. The reader cannot fail observing, that St. Paul is here professedly stating the doctrines of the Gospel, and the idea which he himself had of them. Indeed, he elsewhere represents it as the main design of his commission, to destroy the doctrine of demons; or, to use his own words, *to turn men from these vanities unto the living God**.

From the whole of what occurs in this section, may we not infer that there is much injustice in reproaching the Scriptures with countenancing the doctrine of demoniacal possessions? Did the sacred writers first introduce this doctrine? It is not even pretended that they did. Did they ever assert it as a part of that

* Acts xiv. 15. Compare 1 Thess. i. 9.

revelation

revelation which they were divinely commissioned to publish to the world? They could not thus assert it; for it overturns the main doctrine and evidences of the Jewish and Christian revelations. On the contrary, they have done every thing they could fitly do, to banish it out of the world, by carefully instructing Christians in the absolute nullity of demons, by continually inculcating this principle upon them with a zeal equal to its great importance, and by establishing it upon the clearest evidence. If you regulate your judgment concerning demons by that of the writers either of the Old or New Testament, you must allow that there never was, nor can be, a real demoniac.

CHAPTER II.

I PROCEED to solve the several objections which have been urged against the foregoing explication of the gospel demoniacs.

That the persons spoken of in the New Testament as demoniacs were really such, many have attempted to prove, 1st, From what was said and done by the demoniacs themselves. 2dly, From the destruction of the herd of swine, which the demons are said to have entered, and stimulated to an instantaneous madness. And, 3dly, From the expressions used by our Saviour in performing, and his disciples in recording, the cure of demoniacs. Under these three heads may be comprised all the objections drawn from the New Testament, against the doctrine advanced in the preceding chapter.

SECTION I.

FROM what was said and done by the demoniacs themselves, some have concluded that they were inspired and assisted by superior agents, such as demons are commonly supposed to be.

It must, however, be allowed (what seems to furnish a presumptive argument against this opinion) that the New Testament never represents the language

and behaviour of the demoniacs as the effect and evidence of a supernatural agency. We are only therefore to examine, whether such agency can be justly and certainly inferred from the facts themselves.

1. It is pleaded, *That the demoniacs knew, and proclaimed, Jesus to be Messiah**. The man with an unclean spirit in the synagogue at Capernaum said, *What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God*†. The demoniac in the country of the Gergesenes called him *the Son of God*‡. And we are told that *demons*§ *cried out, and said, Thou art Christ,* (the Messiah) *the Son of God*‖.

The general expectation of the coming of the Messiah at that time, the testimony borne to Jesus by his illustrious forerunner, and the numerous miracles more especially performed by Jesus himself, at the commencement of his public ministry, rendered him the object of universal attention; propagated his fame throughout all Judea, and the countries bordering upon it**, and created in the Jewish people a

* Some add that the demoniacs ascribed to Christ *higher characters than other persons did.* But whoever compares their respective declarations will find this to be a mistake. Compare John i. 49. iv. 42. vii. 41. xi. 27. with the titles ascribed to Christ by the demoniacs. Is it not strange, that Christians should refer to devils the first discovery of the divine claims of the Son of God?

† Luke iv. 34. Mark i. 24.

‡ Matt. viii. 29.

§ By demons we are here to understand demoniacs. See below, p. 151, &c.

‖ Luke iv. 41. ** Matt. iv. 23, 24.

strong

strong persuasion that he was the Messiah. Some of these reputed demoniacs were only subject to epileptic fits*, and consequently might enjoy the use of their understandings like other men, when those fits were not upon them. The other demoniacs were madmen, of whom the Jews give this account: *One while they are mad, another while they are well: while they are mad they are to be esteemed as madmen in respect of all their actions; while they are well, they are to be esteemed as being their own men in all respects*†.

Few are so little acquainted with persons of this sort, as not to know that very frequently their disorder is not only temporary but partial; not affecting their understandings, naturally quick, except perhaps on a single subject, and leaving them on all others in the full possession of themselves.

Now, might not demoniacs, long before they were seized with their disorder, learn, in common with others, the high character of the Messiah, then universally expected? And in their intervals of sanity, so very common to persons of a disordered understanding, might they not hear of the fame of Jesus as the expected Messiah, which was spread in all places before they made any acknowledgment of his character? It is indeed scarce possible that they could be ignorant of him, because in general they were under

* This seems to have been the case with the demoniac at Capernaum, Luke iv. 33. See above, p. 67.

† Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. ad Matt. viii. 28. Compare Dr. Mead's account of madness, p. 67, 68.

no confinement. One of those, whose testimony to Christ is particularly mentioned above, was in the synagogue, a place of public worship. With respect to another, who was in the country of the Gergesenes, it cannot seem extraordinary that he should be acquainted with the character and fame of Jesus*, if we consider that Christ had heretofore preached upon the borders of his country, and been followed by crowds from it, who would not fail to publish the miraculous cures which Christ performed, either upon themselves or upon others, in their presence, among whom were many demoniacs†. We are to consider farther, that, violent as this man's disorder was at certain seasons, he had intervals of sanity; as is clearly implied in its being said, *the spirit had oftentimes*‡ *caught him:* for, if his disorder often returned, it must have often left him§.

If I might be allowed to propose a conjecture, I would observe, that perhaps the demoniacs would run

* It hath been suggested by an ingenious friend, that, by *the Son of God*, this demoniac only meant *a godlike man*; and that he concluded Christ to be such from the majesty of his appearance and the authority with which he spoke. (Mark v. 8.) Compare Matt. xxvii. 54. But he might have the same meaning with those demoniacs who called our Lord *the Messiah, the Son of God.* Luke iv. 41.

† Matt. iv. 24, 25.

‡ πολλοις χρονοις, Luke viii. 27.

§ The same thing, perhaps, is implied in his being *often bound.* Whenever his fits were observed to be coming on, his friends attempted to confine him. See Dr. Lardner's Remarks on Ward, and Mr. Mole, there cited, to whom the public is indebted for this and the foregoing curious and important observation with respect to this demoniac.

into

into the common opinion concerning Jesus as the promised Messiah, more eagerly than persons of a cooler judgment; the latter being struck with some contrary appearances in his character (such as the poverty of his condition, and the spiritual nature of his doctrine), which escaped the attention of the former, who, for this reason, with greater confidence saluted him under his high character, agreeably to the first impression which his miracles made on the minds of all men. This seems to me much more probable, than that infernal spirits should freely and zealously assert the divine claims, and spread the glory of Jesus as the Messiah.

The foregoing observations are, in a great measure, applicable to the case of the Pythoness at Philippi, who, for several days together, followed Paul and his companions, crying out, *These men are the servants of the Most High God, which shew unto us the way of salvation**. Though she laboured under a melancholy, or some species of insanity†, she might be informed, either by attending the preaching of St. Paul, or by conversing with others, what the apostle and his companions professed themselves to be. The strong impression which this information made upon her mind, will easily account for this woman's conduct in following them from day to day in the manner here related; especially if we add that, under a melancholy, the mind is always fixed upon one object. The ho-

* Acts xvi. 17.

† Dissertation on Miracles, p. 275, 276, 8vo edit., and 175, 176, 12mo.: and above, p. 63.

nourable testimony she bore to Paul could not be the effect of the spirit of Python or Apollo, because it tended to disparage himself, and the whole tribe of heathen deities. If you say it was the devil who bore this testimony to Paul, you will find it more difficult still to account for this zeal for truth in the father of lies; because this testimony, as it would appear to proceed from one of their own gods, would have great weight with the Gentiles. Nor was any evil spirit *constrained* to bear this testimony to Paul; for the apostle was grieved at it, and, in order to put a stop to it, cured her disorder*. This brings us to examine another objection against our idea of possessions.

2. It is urged that Christ commanded the *devils* (*demons*) *not to discover him*†. This objection properly belongs to the third general argument in favour of real possessions, and is introduced here only on account of its near affinity to the preceding article.

In order to solve this difficulty, it will be necessary to recollect the idea which the antients entertained concerning demoniacs. It hath been observed already, that the demons within them were supposed to occupy the seat of the human soul, and to perform all

* Acts xvi. 18. It might be expected that some notice should be taken here of the demoniac at Ephesus; but his case will be considered at the close of this section.

† Dr. Warburton, p. 221. See Mark i. 23—26. 34. iii. 12. Luke iv. 33, 34, 35. 41. In the place last referred to here we read, that Jesus, *rebuking them* (the demons), *suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.* The words may as well be rendered, *He suffered them not to say, that they knew him to be Christ*, or *the Messiah.*

its

its functions in the body. During his possession, the demoniac himself was silent; it was the demon alone that spoke in him*. Whatever was done by the former was attributed to the impulse of the latter†. Demoniacs were not only regarded by others, but generally conceived of themselves, as speaking and acting under the influence of the spirits by which they believed themselves possessed‡, or as being those very spirits. At least, every thing they said and did corresponded to their apprehensions of the sentiments and inclinations of the indwelling demons§, being themselves indeed (in their own imagination) nothing more than their organs of speech and action‖. Hence the

* A passage from Plato, full to our present purpose, hath been referred to above, p. 88, note *. Lucian likewise, when stating the common opinion concerning persons possessed, says, in express terms, *The patient is silent; the demon returns the answers to the questions that are asked:* Ὁ μεν νοσων αυτος σιωπα. ὁ δαιμων δε αποκρινεται, ἑλληνιζων, η βαρβαριζων, κ. τ. λ. Apollonius thus addresses a youth supposed to be possessed: ου συ, ταυτα ὑβριζεις, ἀλλ' ὁ δαιμων. Non tu hac me contumelia afficis, sed dæmon. Philostrat. Vit. Apollon. p. 157. ed. Olear.

† Δαιμων ἐλαυνει σε. Dæmon te agit. Philostrat. ubi supra. Menæchmus, under the character of a madman, thus addresses Bacchus and Apollo: Bromie, quò me in sylvam venatum vocas? Multa mihi imperas, Apollo. Ecce, Apollo, denuo me jubes facere impetum. Plaut. Men. act. v. sc. 2. ver. 82. 109. 115.

‡ See the passage from Plautus cited in the preceding note.

§ Cuinam hæc res est similis? Homini in quo est spiritus malus, et opera quæ facit omnia ex ejus sententia facit, et omnia verba quæ loquitur ex ejus sententia loqu ur. Pirke Eliezer 13.

‖ This fully appears from the account given of the demoniacs in the New Testament. They address Jesus in the same manner that (to their apprehension) demons would have done, if they had been pre-

the demon and the demoniac were often, in common speech, confounded together; both were described under the same term *, and the same act was referred indifferently to either. St. Chrysostom, in the passages cited from him above †, at one time represents *the demons* as saying they were the soul of such a monk; though, at another time, he ascribes this to *the demoniacs*. Instances of the same manner of speaking are to be found in the Gospel. St. Mark, on one occasion, says ‡, *Unclean spirits, when they SAW Jesus, FELL DOWN before him, and CRIED; saying, Thou art the Son of God.* On another occasion §, similar to this, the same evangelist represents, not the unclean spirit, but the man supposed to be possessed by him, as *seeing Jesus, worshipping him,* (or *falling down before him* ‖,) *and crying, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son*

sent. Either confounding themselves with demons, and fancying themselves to be such; or else speaking in their names and under their imagined influence; they beg not to be tormented before the time, and ask leave to enter a herd of swine.

* In that passage from Plautus, (Mercator, act. v. sc. 4. v. 20.) Etiam loquere larva, the word larva, which properly signifies a ghost, seems to be used for the madman possessed by him. Demon seems likewise to have been used by the Jews in the same manner. When some reproached Christ *with having a demon, and being mad;* others replied in his vindication, *These are not the words of a demoniac* (δαιμονιζομενου). *Can a demon* (that is, a demoniac) *open the eyes of the blind?* John x. 20, 21: Their meaning was, "His discourses are sober and rational; and is it likely, if he were a possessed person or a madman, that God would impower him to perform such great miracles?"

† P. 30, 31. ‡ Mark iii. 11. § Mark v. 6, 7.

‖ Luke viii. 28.

of

*of the Most High God**? In the sequel of the history of this demoniac, we are told by St. Mark†, that *HE besought Jesus much, that he would not send them away out of the country.* By St. Luke‡, in the parallel passage, it is said, the *DEMONS besought him, that he would not command them to go out into the deep.* The request to enter the swine is, by the three evangelists, referred to the demons§. On all these occasions, the demoniacs were the only persons who spoke to Jesus; of them alone it is true, that they saw him, and fell down before him. Nevertheless, demoniacs having been antiently considered as the mere organs of evil spirits, it was no uncommon thing to ascribe to the latter what was said and done by the former. The evangelists, we have seen, adopted this phraseology, and referred to demons the acts of the demoniacs. And therefore, when they tell us "that Jesus suffered not the *demons* to say that they knew him to be the Messiah," they are to be understood of the *men* possessed by them. These are the persons who published Christ's character; and, on this account, might be enjoined silence. If you still contend, that it was not to the person possessed, but to the spirit supposed to be within him, that Christ addressed this injunction; yet it must be designed to have its effect upon the former, rather than upon

* Matthew likewise, chap. viii. 28, 29. and Luke viii. 28. agree with Mark.

† Chap. v. 10. ‡ Chap. viii. 31.

§ Matt. viii. 31. *The demons besought him.* Mark v. 12. *All the demons besought him.* Luke viii. 32. *They* (the demons) *besought him.*

the latter, who was most effectually silenced by being ejected. In reality, it is a matter of little moment, whether the restraint were laid on the demoniacs or not; for if Christ, in mere conformity to the accustomed modes of speech (as will be shown below in the third section) commanded demons to *come out*; he might, upon the same principle, command them to *be silent*. Nor was any thing more likely to awe the demoniac himself into immediate silence, than his hearing such a command delivered to the spirits that (in his opinion) actuated him, by one so famed as Jesus was for his power of controling them. The language was adapted to his apprehensions and the disturbed state of his mind. And if Christ saw fit to speak to him at all in that state, was it not proper to speak according to his conceptions, and in the manner most likely to be attended with success? Indeed, if Christ had addressed the demoniac, he would nevertheless have been considered as speaking to the demon; as appears from the following fact. When Jesus asked a possessed person*, *What is thy name?* the man, conceiving of himself as an evil spirit, or as being merely the organ of evil spirits, regarded the question as proposed to them, and, under this impression, replied, *My name is legion.*

Christ forbad his own immediate disciples to declare him openly to be the Messiah†, (leaving men

* He asked *him*, αυτον, the man, not, το πνευμα το ακαθαρτον, *the unclean spirit, whom he commanded to come out of the man.* Mark v. 9. See also Luke viii. 30.

† Matt. xvi. 20.

to

to collect it at leisure from the evidence that was set before them,) that he might not draw after him an immense crowd of worldly-minded Jews*, who, mistaking the nature of his kingdom, were disposed, and had once attempted, to take him by force and make him a king†. Persons of such a temper were not prepared to receive the spiritual doctrines of the Gospel; and their following Christ in large crowds, in order to advance him to the throne of David, must have given umbrage to the Roman government, or at least afforded the Jewish rulers, filled with envy and hatred‡ against him, an opportunity of accusing him of sedition and treason. Now, the same prohibition which Christ gave to his own disciples, (and also to many others§,) it was equally proper to give to the demoniacs, whose confident persuasion of his being the Messiah, and warm gratitude to him for the benefit of their miraculous cure, would prompt them to proclaim their exalted opinion of him.

If Christ had any *peculiar* reason for checking the zeal of the demoniacs, it probably was the desire of

* From the same and other motives he sometimes forbad the publication of particular miracles. See Hammond on Matt. viii. 4. Where no inconvenience could arise from it, Christ required the publication of his miracles, as in the case of the Gadarene demoniac, Mark v. 19.

† John vi. ‡ John iv. 1. 3. ix. 22.

§ The strict charge given to demons or demoniacs not to make him known, taken notice of Mark iii. 11, 12. was at the same time given to the multitudes that followed him, in order to be healed, (as appears from Matt. xii. 15, 16.) and probably, therefore, for the same general reason, the desire of preventing all tumult and disturbance. Matt. xii. 18, 19, 20.

leaving no room for the specious pretence that there was a secret agreement between him and those evil spirits, who were judged to be so eager in applauding him. Christ's refusal of (what was deemed to be) their testimony, is a full proof that they were not *constrained* by God to bear it; and at the same time serves to condemn the conduct of those impostors that afterwards swarmed in the Christian church, who laid so great a stress upon the pretended *confession made by demons*, and even claimed a power of *extorting* it against their inclination and interest. The frequent and confident appeal to these confessions which the fathers make, do them no credit, and were, without doubt, received with contempt by men of understanding. For, if demons are wicked and lying spirits, as they are generally supposed to be, they are much more likely to speak falsehood than truth.

3. Some have said, that demoniacs could not be mere madmen, because *they argue with Christ in a very rational manner, and speak to better purpose than the bulk of those who were in their senses.*

This assertion being chiefly founded upon the behaviour of the Gadarene demoniac*, let us inquire how far it agrees with the supposition of his being

* Matt. viii. 28. Mark v. 2. Luke viii. 27. Matthew speaks of *two* demoniacs; Mark and Luke take notice only of *one*, who was probably the fiercer of the two, and had laboured under his disorder a longer time, or on some other account was the most remarkable. He belonged to the neighbouring city, (Luke viii. 27. and Wetstenius in loc.) and was probably a man of note and substance there; as Dr. Lardner conjectures in his Remarks on Dr. Ward's Dissertations, p. 3. See also his Case of the Demoniacs, p. 4, 5. 10.

directed

directed and assisted by superior intelligences in all that he said and did. 1. When *the demoniac saw Jesus afar off, he ran** to meet him. Was not this conduct absurd on the common hypothesis? The unclean spirit dreaded nothing so much as being expelled and tormented by Jesus; and yet hastens into his immediate presence, instead of flying from it. 2. In the next place, *the demoniac fell down before Jesus, and worshipped him*†. Did the devil, under whose influence he is supposed to act, hope, by this external homage, to deceive the Son of God into a good opinion of him, or to bend him to a compliance with his proposals? 3. When Christ said, *What is thy name?* how ridiculous is the answer, in case it was returned by the unclean spirit, *My name is legion; for we are many.* Suppose that in a large army, either a private soldier, or one of the officers, being asked what his *own* name was, should reply, *My name is army; for we are many*; what opinion would you have of his understanding? or how would this name distinguish either the soldier or the officer from all the other soldiers and officers in the army‡? 4. More

* Mark v. 6. † Luke viii. 28. Mark v. 6.

‡ It is very astonishing to find writers of sound judgment in other matters, inferring from this answer of the demoniac, or (as they suppose) of the devil, that the madman was really possessed by a great multitude, if not exactly by a legion, of devils. Is any credit due to the father of lies? Can there be a better reason for disbelieving any thing than his affirming it to be true? Could Christ design to bring mankind to give *him* credit, and to receive doctrines upon *his* testimony? If one demon alone can, as it is supposed he can, deprive a man

4. More absurd still was the behaviour of the devil, (if he were the demon here spoken of,) when Christ ordered him *to come out of the man**, of whom he had taken possession. One moment he disclaims the authority of Jesus, and resents his undertaking to eject him: *What have I to do with thee, thou Son of the Most High God*†? The very next instant, he acknowledges his power over him, and entreats him not to exert it: *I beseech thee, I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.* Immediately after, he upbraids and reproaches him, and, at the same time, appears to expect some effects of his displeasure, *Art thou come hither to torment us before the time*‡? He hath recourse again to supplication, and beseeches Christ, *that he might not be sent away out of the country*§, *nor commanded to go out into the deep*‖. To

man of his sight, and speech, and hearing, and of his reason too, and do all this in a moment, why should a legion of demons be employed, and lose that time which they might have spent in doing mischief elsewhere?

* Luke viii. 29. Mark v. 8. † Luke viii. 28. Mark v. 7.

‡ Matt. xxviii. 29. The time here referred to is commonly thought to be that of the day of judgment, (2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude vi.) which was considered as the season appointed for the punishment of all evil spirits. See Rev. xx. 10. 15.

§ Mark v. 10.

‖ Luke viii. 31. By *the deep or abyss*, we are most probably to understand the place allotted to the wicked, in the interval between their death and the final judgment, called *the pit of the abyss*, φρεαρ της αβυσσου, Rev. ix. 1, 2. and *the abyss*, v. 11. See also chap. xx. 1, 2, 3. This place is called *their prison*, 1 Pet. iii. 19. Here they are *reserved unto judgment*, 2 Pet. ii. 4. See Whitby on this place, and above, p. 127.

and

To the devil, we are told, *the whole world is but one place**. Why then doth he dread a temporary banishment from so small a spot as the country of Gadara? Why is he so uneasy at being cast out of one man, if he hath the power of entering another? Why doth he fear being sent into the *deep* or *abyss*? Whatever idea he had of this place, he deprecates an evil he had not been threatened with; and which, had it been threatened, he could not hope to avert by his intercession; especially if he asked, as some suppose he did, for leave to continue in that country, only for the sake of opposing Christ? What is still more extraordinary, while under a dread of Christ, as his judge and avenger, who could have remanded him to the abyss for his past crimes, he asks for leave to do farther mischief, and to enter into a large herd of swine; desirous, it is pretended, to bring an odium upon Jesus, as the author of the mischief. Could the devil expect such a request to be granted? Lastly, when he had procured for himself and his associates

and Jude v. 6. It was the opinion of the Jews, that these evil spirits were on some occasions released from their confinement, and suffered to wander upon the earth till the end of the world. Perhaps, what the demoniac, considering himself as the mere organ of an indwelling demon, dreaded, (though without any visible reason) was the being remanded back to this prison sooner than he should otherwise have been; or the being punished before the day of judgment. According to this interpretation of *the deep*, the demoniac, it may be thought, speaks in character. By *the deep*, according to some, we are to understand *the sea*. In favour of this application of the word here, it may be pleaded that nothing is too absurd to come from a madman.

* Totus orbis illis locus unus est. Tertullian, p. 23. Rigalt. Paris, 1641.

the

the quarters he desired, why did he, by destroying the swine, lay himself and his legion under a necessity of seeking new ones, which, he acknowledges, were not to be had in that country without the consent of our Saviour? Nay, he seems to have asked leave to enter the swine with a farther view, viz. to prevent his being sent immediately to the place of punishment. How absurd then was it wilfully to expose himself to the evil he deprecated, by drowning the whole herd? Would you, if you were in your senses, pull down your house, in which you wished and were allowed to live, if you knew that, whenever it was destroyed, you should for some past crime be confined in a dreadful dungeon, and suffer upon the rack? On the whole, I am not able to discern, in any part of the demoniac's behaviour, the signs of extraordinary sagacity, such as mark the agency of a spirit of celestial origin; and therefore can see no reason to believe, that any such spirit made use of the organs of the man to carry on a conversation with Jesus.

On the contrary, the behaviour of the demoniac, from the view we have already taken of it, appears to be that of a madman, agreeably to the express representation of him in the history*. Nor is any one circumstance mentioned concerning him inconsistent with this representation. Here it should be observed, that it was a common opinion amongst the Jews, if not amongst all the people of the East, in the belief

* See above, chap. i. p. 59, &c.

of

of which the Gadarene demoniac must have been educated, that the punishment of the spirits of wicked men would not be completed till the day of judgment*. It must be observed farther, that Jesus had been long famed for expelling demons, and thereby exercising an absolute power over them. Nor is there any reason to suppose that this demoniac was a stranger to his fame in this respect†: for though a considerable time had elapsed since his first seizure with madness, yet his disorder only returned at certain seasons, with intervals of sanity between them‡. Every one knows that madmen are often distinguished by the quickness and acuteness of their natural parts. Their lucid intervals sometimes last for a considerable time; and, in some cases, a single moment makes a vast alteration. Even under their disorder, they sometimes say things surprisingly just, far more so than any thing said by the Gadarene demoniac. They reason rightly from wrong principles, and appear both raving and sober at the same time, especially on different subjects. We must add, that the unhappy man, whose case we are considering, being, like other demoniacs, strongly tinctured with the common opinion about possessions, fancied himself really possessed§; nay, sometimes (as was usual in such cases) personated the demon by whom he thought himself inspired, and spoke as if he was

* See Job xxvi. 5. explained above, p. 126, and p. 158, 159.

† See above, chap. ii. p. 147. ‡ P. 148.

§ This is justly reckoned as a symptom of madness by P. Ægineta, cited by Wetstein, v. i. p. 281.

himself

himself that very demon. Now his conduct is the natural result of the principles and impressions here explained, and of a disordered understanding.

Perceiving at a distance the company, at the head of which was Jesus, the demoniac, then in the height of his disorder, *ran* to them*, as he was wont to do to all passengers, whom he was eager to assault: for we are told that he was *exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass that way*†. Our Lord, observing his approach, said, *Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit*‡. This language is by two evangelists expressly assigned as the reason of the demoniac's address to Christ§, and consequently was prior to it. Hence the demoniac concluded, that the person who addressed him was the same who was so famed all over Judea for his power over demons, and he *worshipped*, or *fell down before him*, acknowledging him to be *the Son of God*‖. It is observable, that some space of time intervened between the command of

* Mark v. 6.

† Matt. viii. 28. Similar examples, were they wanted, might be found in Wetsten. in loc. p. 354. These demoniacs were chiefly dangerous to strangers who passed pretty near the tombs, whence they might be suddenly and unexpectedly assaulted. The swine-herds, though at no very great distance, might have no apprehension of danger, either on account of their own superior numbers, or on account of their former success against the madmen, who are not wont to renew their assaults upon those by whom they have been once severely handled.

‡ Mark v. 8. Luke viii. 29.

§ *For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man.* Luke viii. 29. Mark v. 8.

‖ Mark v. 7. Luke viii. 28. Compare John ix. 35—38.

Christ

Christ and the cure of the demoniac, though, on other occasions, his commands were *instantly* obeyed. Here the execution of it was suspended, and a conversation carried on with the demoniac, to give the spectators, who were strangers to him, an opportunity of deliberately observing his visage and behaviour (which manifested the great disorder of his mind), as well as to prepare the way for the event that immediately succeeded the cure of the demoniac. No sooner, however, did Christ say, *Come out, thou unclean spirit*, than the demoniac was awed and checked*, as it was necessary he should, to prevent his doing mischief to the company. But, instead of rejoicing in the hope of deliverance from his present misery, and being thankful to Jesus for the favour designed him, he conceives himself injured, is displeased, and remonstrates: *What have I to do with thee, thou Son of the Most High God?* Believing himself to be an evil demon, or that he was actuated by a demon speaking in and by him, he feels a dread of Christ's power; and in the name of the demon, or his own, *he beseeches and adjures Christ not to torment*

* His awe of Christ might be owing to some supernatural impression, or else be the mere effect of Christ's rebuke. It is well known, that even the fiercest madmen are liable to strong impressions of *fear*, and are often restrained by threatenings. See Mead's Med. Sacr. p. 79, 80. The following account is given by Aëtius, iii. 8, 9. de Melancholia: Γίγνονται δὲ οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν μελαγχολικῶν δειλοί. In the case before us, the demoniac was certainly much afraid of Christ; and on this account, it is probable, forbore to assault the company.

him.

*him**. He pleads with him that the time appointed for the punishment of wicked spirits was not yet come; and seemingly upbraids him with an intention of inflicting that punishment before the time. Then dropping the thought of the day of judgment, he expects some marks of displeasure immediately; what he could not tell, whether being banished from that country, or drowned in the sea, or sent to the abyss. Our Saviour, to give the spectators a still farther opportunity of observing the height of his distraction, as well as for the other reason just now mentioned, continued

* It is difficult to determine the precise ideas of the madman, when he besought Christ *not to torment him before the time*, Matt. viii. 29. I cannot forbear to mention Wetstein's interpretation of this passage, which may deserve to be examined. Non quod aliquando tempestivum esset torqueri, sed ita loquuntur maniaci; recordabantur, quomodo vi et vinculis constricti, modo medicamentum ingratum et purgans bibere, modo venæ sectionem pati, et ad præscriptum medici vivere fuerint coacti, quibus similia metuebant. That maniacs were antiently treated with great severity, appears from the testimonies produced by Wetstein, p. 355, and from Celsus, lib. iii. cap. 18, who recommends punishing such of them as do mischief with hunger, chains, and stripes. What was dreaded, seems to be, not such treatment, but the being sent to the abyss. Compare the language of another demoniac parallel to this: *Art thou come to destroy us?* Mark i. 24. Luke iv. 34.

It is very remarkable, that not only this demoniac, but others, (Mark i. 24.) express great perturbation at the sight of Christ, and the apprehension of being cured. If you say it was the devil who expressed this perturbation; I answer, Why then did he not immediately withdraw himself from the presence of Christ, and enter and torment persons at a distance? It is certain that the demoniacs speak

continued the conversation, and asked him, *What is thy name*?* He answered, like a madman, who thought himself possessed with a multitude of demons, or that he was one of the number, *My name is legion; for we are many*, more than six thousand. He could not know that he was possessed by a single demon, much less that he was possessed by a vast multitude of demons; but he spoke what his disorder suggested; and either fancied himself to be a legion of demons, or to be actuated by a legion. He confounds himself with those spirits under whose influence he supposed himself to speak and act.

Just at this instant, as his eyes wandered, he dis-

speak as if they themselves were demons; and they might fancy themselves really such, more naturally than fancy their being many other things. Cælius Aurelian. Morb. Chron. i. 5. de Mania: Furens alius se passerem existimavit, alius gallum gallinaceum, alius fictile, alius laterem, alius deum. And P. Ægineta, iii. 14, de Melancholia et Insania, et his qui Numine afflati putantur: Putant aliqui se animalia bruta esse, et illorum voces imitantur: alii qui vero vasa testacea se esse putant, et ne frangantur timent.—Quidam vero etiam putant se ab aliquibus majoribus potestatibus impeti.

Now a madman, who conceived himself to be a demon, or who represented one, being accommodated, as he thought, with a suitable habitation, and believing that Jesus was that extraordinary prophet who cast out demons, might be (as the demoniacs of the Gospel were) greatly terrified at Jesus's approach, lest he should be expelled by him, and perhaps subjected to some additional or premature punishment. See above, p. 158, 159.

* This question, in any other view than that here pointed out, seems liable to many other objections besides those mentioned by Rousseau in the introduction. Would Christ ask the devil his name? In what language did he expect an answer? For whose information could that answer be designed? See above, p. 157.

cerned

cerned at some distance a herd of swine; and, agreeably to the false apprehensions he had of himself, said, *If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.* A strange request for an immaterial being, a pure spirit, and one of celestial origin, to make! but not at all unsuitable to the character of a madman, that fancied himself to be, or that spoke in the name of, an unclean spirit, who, next to tombs defiled by the bodies of dead men, could find out no habitation more unclean, or more conformable to his ideas of himself, than the body of a swine*.

Were it possible to find out a rational meaning for every thing said by the demoniac, even this would not prove that he spoke by the suggestion of the devil: for madmen sometimes say things surprisingly just, which is far from being the case with this demoniac, whose whole conduct seems to me to correspond precisely to that of a mere madman, under those impressions which he had received from education, and the information he gained in the intervals of his sanity. But the truth is, that interpreters, to support a favourite hypothesis, ascribe to him sense and sagacity more than human, though the history itself will warrant us to pronounce him disordered in his understanding; and they force a rational construction upon the very circumstances, which seem to

* Cum putarent, se immundos esse spiritus, non potuerunt aptius domicilium sibi eligere post sepulchra quam porcos. Jalkut Rubeni f. 10. 2. Anima idololatrarum quæ venit a spiritu immundo, vocatur porcus. Wetstein on Matt. viii. 31.

have been mentioned by the evangelists with no other view than to illustrate his insanity.

4. It hath been alleged, that demoniacs discovered more than human strength. This allegation is chiefly supported by the case of the demoniac under the foregoing article, who had been often bound with chains and fetters, and had as often broken them *.

The antients, perhaps, were less skilful than the moderns in the methods of confining such unhappy persons; and who is ignorant that mere madmen discover very amazing strength †, from an extraordinary flow of animal spirits, or from some other cause, especially in the most violent paroxysms of their disorder? But so great is the force of prejudice, as to make the plainest symptoms of a natural disease, proofs of the interposition of superior beings.

I cannot conclude this section without taking notice of the case of the demoniac at Ephesus, who is thought to have given proofs both of power and knowledge more than human. To the Jewish exorcists, *who took upon them to call over those that had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, the evil spirit* (that is, the man who was supposed to be possessed by him ‡) *said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but*

* Mark v. 3, 4.

† Cassii Problem. 61. Cur phrenetici et furiosi in paroxysmis robustiores sunt, viresque habent auctas? Wetstein on Matt. viii. p. 355.

‡ We have here a new proof, that the demon or evil spirit is sometimes put for the demoniac. See above, p. 151, &c.

who

who are ye? The historian adds, *And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leapt upon them, and overcame them**. Before this event, St. Paul, for the space of two years, had cured all sorts of diseases, and ejected demons, in the name of Jesus, at Ephesus: how then could this demoniac be ignorant either of Jesus or Paul? Moreover, the demoniac finding that certain Jewish impostors vainly pretended to the power of expelling demons, and fancying himself to be a demon, or possessed by one, his indignation and rage (accelerating the motion of his blood and spirits) supplied him with new strength, and he assaulted and vanquished the exorcists, who were not prepared to make a defence, and were disgraced and dispirited by the public detection of their imposture. The disappointment and disgrace of these magicians served to vindicate the credit of St. Paul's miracles, to create a high reverence of Jesus, in confirmation of whose divine authority they were performed, and to deter others from profaning his sacred name, by using it only as a charm†.

The

* Acts xix. 10—17.

† Hence it appears, that if this demoniac were assisted by a supernatural power, this assistance must have proceeded from God, not from the evil spirit, who could have no other aim than to lessen the credit both of our Saviour and his apostle. Nor could a display of the power of the demon, on this occasion, produce any other effect than creating a suspicion in the people that Jesus and Paul were confederates with himself. If with this malicious view he was willing to bear testimony to Christ, what occasion was there for his being *compelled* to bear it by God? and would God favour his malicious views?

The more carefully I examine the language and behaviour of the New Testament demoniacs, the more difficult doth it appear to me to draw from them a proof of the reality of demoniacal possessions. I cannot discover in them clear and certain marks of the interposition of any superior agents, much less of infernal spirits, who certainly could have no great zeal to assert the honour of their enemy and avenger. In a word, if you will ascribe the conduct of the demoniacs to the agency of demons, you must allow that the latter acted out of character, and were as mad as the demoniacs themselves could be.

SECTION II.

A FARTHER argument in favour of real possessions is taken from the destruction of the herd of swine, which the demons are said to have entered, and stimulated to instantaneous madness*. This case is considered by some as a decisive proof of the power of demons, both over the human and brutal race, and is thought even to have been purposely designed by Providence to convince us of this principle, and to refute the opposite opinion.

views? The occurrence related seems to have been providentially designed to bring disgrace upon the Jewish exorcists, and thereby to answer the purposes mentioned above.

* Matt. viii. 30. Mark v. 11. Luke viii. 32.

To enervate this argument, Dr. Sykes suggested*, and Dr. Lardner† strenuously contended, that *the swine were frighted by the two madmen, and so driven down the precipice into the sea.* On the other hand, the advocates of the common hypothesis insist upon it, (to my apprehension, with great reason,) that it was impossible for two men, however fierce, to put so vast a herd of swine as two thousand into motion in an instant, and to cause them all to rush with violence down a precipice into the sea; swine, contrary to the nature of most other animals, running different ways when they are driven‡. But this part of the controversy might well be spared; it not appearing from the history, that the men ever fell upon the herd, or made any attempt to drive them into the sea. Nay, the history expressly refers their destruction to a different cause from the behaviour of the madmen.

To understand the true state of the case, which doth not seem to have been attended to by the writers on either side of the question, we must recollect that those persons who were antiently thought to be possessed, were disordered in their understandings. These

* Inquiry, p. 52.

† Case, p. 17. 101. and Remarks on Dr. Ward, p. 17.

‡ Not to add, that it was next to impossible that these two men should overcome all those who tended the swine; especially as, in order to compass the herd, they must have separated from each other. And indeed had they, under the influence of their disorder, driven the swine into the sea, it is strange that they did not follow them there.

two,

two, possession and madness, were imagined to bear to each other the relation of *cause* and *effect*, and accordingly to commence and cease together. When demons were supposed to *enter* any creature, immediately he grew mad; when they *departed*, this disorder was removed. The *evidence* of their entrance was madness; and a composed behaviour was the *evidence* of their departure. And therefore, when it is said, in the case under consideration, that the demons *went out* of the madmen, and *entered* the swine; the evangelists, if you interpret their language agreeably to the popular opinion on which it is founded, must mean, that the madmen, in consequence of the departure of the demons, were cured, and restored to their right mind*; and that the swine, in consequence of the demons entering them, were infected with rage and madness; the cure of the former, and the madness of the latter, being the very ground upon which it was concluded, that the demons had quitted the one, and taken possession of the other. The evangelists must farther mean by this language, that the men were cured *before* the swine were disordered; otherwise they would not have spoken of the demons as passing out of the former into the latter: *When they came out of the men, they entered the herd of swine* †.

It appears likewise from the history, that at the

* This appears from Mark v. 15. Luke viii. 35. where the man is described as being *in his right mind*, after the demons were departed from him. See above, p. 59, &c.

† Luke viii. 32. Matt. viii. 32.

time the demoniacs were cured they were present with Christ, and the herd of swine *at some distance from them**. Nevertheless, no sooner was leave asked for the demons to enter the herd, than it was granted: *Forthwith*, or *immediately*, *Jesus gave them leave, and said unto them, Go. Then went the demons out of the men,*

* In Matt. viii. 30. we read, *There was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding*, Ην δε μακραν απ' αυτων, κ. τ. λ. But St. Mark says, *There was* THERE *nigh to* (or *on*) *the mountains* (many manuscripts, versions, and printed copies read in the singular number, προς τω ορει, *the mountain*) *a great herd of swine feeding*. And St. Luke (chap. viii. 32.) confirms this account of St. Mark, *There was there on the mountain*, Ην δε εκει εν τω ορει, *an herd of many swine*. A learned and very ingenious friend conjectures, that the original in St. Matthew contained the negative particle, as the *Vulgate* now doth, Erat autem *non* longe ab illis: which reading was approved by Beza and other learned writers. He adds, "Dr. Mill, in his note on Matt. viii. 30. conjectures that the negative particle was added in the Vulgate by Jerome; but it is to be observed, that the particle is in a manuscript now extant, which is supposed to have been written by Eusebius of Vercelli before Jerome flourished. It is also in four other very antient Latin manuscripts, published by Blanchini in his Evangeliarium Quadruplex. Concerning the Eusebian manuscript, Dr. Kennicott (Hebrew Text, vol. i. p. 306.) observed, "that Blanchini had lately printed a manuscript of the Gospels in the old Latin version writ by Eusebius, who died in the year 371, which might therefore be above 1380 years old." In farther confirmation of the reading of the Vulgate, my friend observes, "that the Persic version, in Matt. viii. 30. reads, Erat PROPE eos grex porcorum (agreeably to the same version, Mark v. 11.); and that if this version was made from the Syriac, (as Mill, in his Prolegom. No. 1370, 1472, and Michaelis, in his Introductory Lectures, sect. 59. assert,) it is probable that this latter version originally agreed with the Vulgate; and that it hath been since altered, as the versions have been in many instances, in conformity to

*men, and entered into the herd of swine**. The demoniacs, therefore, were cured upon the spot, while the swine continued feeding quietly by themselves; and consequently they had *no opportunity* of falling upon them and forcing them down a precipice into the sea. Farther, the men, at this time, could have *no disposition* to make any such attempt upon the herd; for we have seen, that *before* the latter grew

to the corrupted Greek. See Dr. Kennicott's Observations on 1 Sam. vi. 19. p. 37, 38. Should that celebrated person, who is now employed in collating the manuscripts of the Old Testament, undertake to collate those of the New, (a task for which he is so eminently qualified, and of equal importance with that in which he is now engaged,) we shall then be able to determine whether any Greek manuscripts support the reading of the Vulgate. In the mean time, it is proper to observe, that, in the opinion of many, there is no contradiction between Matthew (according to the present reading) and the other evangelists; for the word μακραν, used by the former, may here only denote *some distance*. It is applied, in the Septuagint and other writings, to such as is not very considerable, Exod. xxxiii. 7. Josh. iii. 4. Vide Mill. Kuster. et Wetsten. on Matt. viii. 30. The Syriac version is, Erat *ultra* ipsos grex porcorum. It appears from the history, that no sooner had Jesus landed, than he was met by the demoniac; and that on or near the very same mountain, at the foot of which Jesus stood, the herd of swine was feeding, at some distance, though not such as was very considerable, so as either to prevent their being seen by the demoniacs, or the swine-herds from being witnesses of what passed. It is no improbable conjecture of my worthy friend, that some of the swine-herds (for many must have been employed in looking after so large a herd), seeing the crowd of people, might be drawn by curiosity to the very spot where Jesus stood, and were hereby enabled with certainty to inform the people of the city, both of the cure of the demoniacs, and of the destruction of the swine; which they did immediately.

* Mark v. 13. Matt. viii. 32. Luke viii. 33.

mad, or appeared under any disorder, the former were restored to their right mind; or, in other words, the demons had *left* the men before they *took possession* of the swine. The men, therefore, if the words of the evangelists are to be our guide, neither drove, nor attempted to drive, the herd into the sea. Had the spectators seen them engaged in such a mad and mischievous attempt, they would not have thought the demons had left them, but considered them still as possessed madmen. The history, it is certain, doth expressly ascribe the destruction of the swine, not to their being *driven by the demoniacs*, but to the *entrance of demons* into them, or to their being seized with the same disorder from which the men were relieved, and which was thought to be caused by demons. The evangelists, even supposing them to have adopted the common hypothesis, would not have said that the demons had entered the swine, if the latter had only been pursued by the demoniacs.

Nor can I see any room to dispute the testimony of the evangelists in this matter. For, whatever their opinion was with respect to the *cause* of these men's disorder, which was *secret* and *invisible*, all must allow that they were capable judges of the *disorder itself*, of its *outward symptoms* and effects, which fell under the notice of their senses. They, and all who were present, though they could not see the demons passing from the men into the swine, yet could not but see whether the men were cured of their madness, and the swine infected with the same disorder: they could not but see at what time these different events happened;

happened; whether the madmen, while they were still under the power of their disorder in the highest degree, fell upon the swine with great violence, and so caused them to precipitate themselves into the sea; or whether, after their cure (evinced by the composure of their behaviour), and while they were at some distance from the herd, the swine grew mad, and, without any other reason for it, rushed with fury into the water. And therefore, if we believe them to be faithful historians, we must give them credit when they declare the following obvious and sensible fact, that just after the men became composed, (or, in their own language, just after the demons left them,) the swine became outrageous, (or the demons entered them,) and, to the astonishment of the spectators, rushed upon their own destruction. *Behold! the whole herd of swine,* consisting of two thousand, *ran violently down a steep place into the sea.* The swine-herds were of the same opinion with the evangelists, with regard to the fact in question; for the absent Gadarenes, who received their information from the swine-herds, had no apprehension that the madmen were the cause of the destruction of the swine, but considered it as a divine judgment: for they *were seized with great fear, and prayed Jesus to depart out of their coasts**; dreading, without doubt, some new calamity

* Mark v. 16, 17. Extraordinary manifestations of the divine power and presence being awful and affecting, (Ex. xx. 19. xxxiii. 20. xxxiv. 30. Judg. vi. 22. ch. xiii. 22. Luke ii. 8—15. v. 8—10. Mark iv. 41. Luke viii. 25. Matt. xvii. 6, 7.) Dr. Lardner ascribes the fear of the Gadarenes to the cure of the demoniacs, as the effects

calamity from the exertion of Christ's power. Nor did our Saviour contradict this opinion; though he might, without opposing their prejudices concerning demons, have plainly told them, had that been the real truth, that the swine were frighted into the sea by the demoniacs, and thereby have removed their prejudices against himself. For these reasons I cannot accede to the opinion of those learned writers who ascribe the destruction of the swine to the madmen.

Neither can I see any just ground for ascribing it to the agency of demons. We have before shewn how groundless and how absurd it is, to attribute to human spirits such a power as possessions imply. The arguments urged above against the supposition of their entering the bodies of *men*, and stimulating them to madness, conclude with equal (or nearly equal) force against their having the like power over the *brute creation*. Reason and experience, our only guides in the study of nature, loudly declaim against this doctrine. If we suppose (and we shall, in the next section, endeavour to prove that it is not a

of a divine power: but he is forced to allow, that they *were apprehensive of suffering in their worldly interests*, which the miraculous loss of the swine alone could occasion. See his Remarks on Ward, p. 19—22. Besides, a miracle, whatever awe and dread it may impress upon the persons *present*, is never said to produce this effect upon *the absent* to whom it is related, unless when it was punitive and alarming in its very nature. The dread felt upon the sight of a beneficent miracle, arises from its being a sensible token of a peculiar exertion of the power of God at the instant of its performance; and therefore the great fear with which *the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about* were seized, cannot be accounted for by a bare relation of the cure of the demoniac.

groundless

groundless supposition) that the evangelists, in reciting the case of the demoniacs, have only borrowed an accustomed mode of speech, without designing to give a sanction to the opinion on which it was at first founded; all that can be inferred from their saying, that *the demons came out of* the men, and entered the herd of swine,* is, that the madness of the former was transferred to the latter, in the same sense as *the leprosy of Naaman was to cleave to Gehazi, and to his seed for ever*†. We allow what a learned writer

* How little stress should be laid upon its being said, the demons *came out* of the man, may appear from hence, that the leprosy is said *to depart*, or *to go from* the leper (απηλθεν απ' αυτου) when he was cured, Mark i. 42. Luke v. 13.

† 2 Kings v. 27. Compare Numb. xi. 16, 17. *I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them.* Dr. Lardner (Case of Demoniacs, p. 17.) will not allow that the lunacy was transferred from the men to the swine, because this implies, that the destruction of the latter was owing to the interposition of Christ, whose miracles, the doctor apprehends, were all benevolent, except the withering a useless fig-tree. But was not his driving the profane traders out of the court of the Gentiles at the Jewish passover, a *punitive* miracle (*a*)? And, in the case before us, the doctor allows (p. 18.) that *Christ's leave was asked and granted*; which is making Christ answerable for what was done.

(*a*) Some doubt whether this was any miracle at all; but whoever considers, that those who usually came from all parts to celebrate the passover, were not fewer in number than three millions, (Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 14. § 3. See also lib. vi. cap. ix. § 3.) and that, in the court of the Gentiles, were exposed to sale, by authority of the Jewish rulers, all the animals that were to be offered up in sacrifice, (not less than 256,500, according to Josephus, Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 9. § 3. p. 899. ed. Havercamp.) and whatever else the service of the sanctuary required; and that neither the mercenary traffickers, nor any of the multitude, made any opposition to Christ, will perhaps be of opinion, that they were intimidated and overawed by a divine power, and agree with Jerome (in Matt. tom. ix. p. 31. ed. Basil. 1516) that it was the most wonderful of all the miracles of Jesus.

contends for, that in the case before us *the power of imagination could have no place**. It was never said that the swine *fancied* themselves possessed; their disorder, I admit, was *real*, but not therefore *demoniacal*. So great a miracle as that wrought upon them, can be ascribed to no other agency than that of God. Accordingly, we are told that it was performed at the word or command of Christ: *Forthwith Jesus gave them* (the demons, the reputed causes of madness) *leave, and said unto them, Go.*

Should any inquire into the reasons of this divine dispensation, I might answer, that he who gave life to all hath a right to resume it, and doth often resume it, both from men and beasts, and visit their bodies with disorders, for reasons unsearchable by the human understanding; but many wise and important purposes were answered by the miraculous destruction† of the swine.

1. It was a just punishment of the owners. For though Josephus calls Gadara (near which this miracle was wrought) *a Greek city*‡, and it was a part of the province of Syria; yet, during the reign of Herod, it had belonged to Judea, on which country it bordered, and was, no doubt, in part inhabited by Jews, who probably owned the swine; for to that

* Dr. Warburton, p. 223, 224.

† Some think the loss was inconsiderable to the owners of the swine, as the heathens would not scruple eating the flesh of *strangled* animals.

‡ Antiq. lib. xvii. cap. 11. § 4. He elsewhere (Bell. Jud. lib. ii. c. 18. § 1.) speaks of it as a city of the Syrians.

people

people Christ's personal ministry was confined, and on their territory he then stood. Now, the Jews were prohibited* by the laws of Hyrcanus from keeping swine, and by the law of Moses from partaking of them as food†. Their breach of the former naturally led to the violation of the latter. Our Lord, though he declined acting as a magistrate, yet, as a prophet, he might be commissioned by God to punish them either for this or any other crimes. And there was the greater propriety in *his* doing it for their offence, as they were not subject to the jurisdiction of the Jewish Sanhedrim, living under heathen government. The disposition they discovered upon this occasion, in being more impressed with the loss of their substance than with the miracle wrought for their conviction, shows how well they deserved correction, as the miracle itself served to manifest Christ's own regard to the law of God.

2. The destruction of the swine served to ascertain the *reality*, and to spread the *fame* of the miracle performed upon the demoniacs. No miracle is more suspicious than the supposed expulsion of demons,

* See Dr. Doddridge's Fam. Expos. vol. i. p. 428. 2d edit. Dr. Whitby and Grotius on Matt. viii. 31.

† From this prohibition of Moses, some have inferred that it is very improbable that the Jews should breed up swine. But that the Jews did breed up swine is evident from the laws of Hyrcanus against this practice. The owners of the swine here spoken of, supposing them to be Jews, very probably bred them for sale (in part), having an opportunity of disposing of them to the Greeks in Gadara, and other heathens, in whose neighbourhood they lived.

abstracted from the cure of bodily disorders, there being much room left for collusion between the person imagined to be possessed and the exorcist. Frauds of this kind, both amongst Jews and Gentiles, were common in that age, as they have also since been in a very scandalous degree amongst Christians. But it is self-evident that a herd of swine could not be confederates in any fraud. Those who were strangers to the demoniacs (and such the attendants* of Christ probably were) could not doubt of the reality of their disorder, or its cure, when they saw it so wonderfully transferred to the swine. Hereby Christ established the credit, not only of the miracle performed upon these, but upon all other demoniacs, for the conviction and benefit of mankind. That Christ's intention was benevolent, more especially towards the Gadarenes, is certain from his refusing to give the persons whom he cured leave to accompany him, and ordering them to acquaint their countrymen, *how great things God had done for them* †.

* Besides his own disciples, and the sailors who belonged to the ship in which Christ and his disciples had arrived, he was attended by many others (Mark i. 36.), and all of them it is probable were strangers to the demoniacs. Before this time he was followed with uncommon zeal by multitudes wherever he went. Mark i. 45. Luke iv. 42, 43. Lardner against Ward, p. 13.

† Mark v. 19. Luke viii. 39. Concerning one of the demoniacs, we are told, that he did accordingly *publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him. And all men did marvel.* Mark v. 20. As the demoniacs were well known in these parts, their cure must have had a greater effect here than amongst perfect strangers.

The

The loss of the swine would propagate the *fame**, as well as establish the reality, of the miracle performed upon these demoniacs. The cure of a demoniac in this obscure part of the country might have been little known or remembered, had it not been attended with some extraordinary and affecting circumstances; such as would necessarily excite the attention of mankind, and naturally lead them to an inquiry into the character of Christ, and thus prepare them to receive the subsequent preaching of his apostles. Most highly beneficial to them was this miracle, if their temporal loss were the means of their gaining everlasting blessings.

3. The miracle performed upon the swine was calculated to correct the false notions, concerning the power of demons, which were entertained in that age, as well by Jews as Gentiles, by both of whom Gadara was inhabited. Very far were either of them from wanting (what some have supposed it was the express design of Christ on this occasion to give) proofs of the great power of demons over mankind. The belief of their power was already too deeply rooted in the minds of men, and was the ground of much idolatry and superstition.

Let us examine then the nature of the miracle in

* *They that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country*, divulged every where both the loss of the swine, and the cure of the demoniacs, Matt. viii. 33. Mark v. 14. Hereupon the people came in a body to Jesus, saw, with astonishment, the demoniacs restored to the use of their reason, and received a particular account and full confirmation of what had befallen the swine. Mark v. 15, 16. Luke viii. 35, 36.

question,

question, and see whether it contains any proof of the power of demons. The *outward and sensible effect*, which was all that could be designed for the conviction of mankind, consisted in transferring the disorder of the demoniacs to the swine; or rather in the swine becoming mad, immediately after the men were cured. Now, upon what ground do you affirm that this effect was produced by demons? If they had any concern in it, it was by soliciting the interposition of Christ; which looks like an acknowledgment of their own impotence. It took place at the command of Christ: to him therefore, and to that divine power by which he acted, it is most natural to refer it. You allow that God was the author of the miracles performed upon the demoniacs. The history ascribes them to him in the most express terms*, calling them (as we have just now seen) *great things which God had done for the demoniacs*; not things which he permitted the *devil* to do for them. Now the history will no more allow you to doubt of God's being the author of the disorder of the swine, than of the cure of the demoniacs; for, by the same sovereign word, *GO*, both these miracles were accomplished. You cannot, therefore, ascribe them to different causes. That the madness of the swine was not owing to a demoniacal agency, is farther evident from hence, that their disorder terminated in their destruction; an event which it was the interest of the demons to use all possible means to prevent; because, according to (what is

* P. 180, note †.

deemed)

deemed) their own conceptions of things, it exposed them to some terrible punishment*. Now, since it clearly appears, that the madness of *the swine* was not owing to the agency of demons, is it not a natural inference from hence, that the madness of *the demoniacs* was not owing to that cause; that the request in particular made in the name of the demons to enter the herd of swine, and consequently all the other parts of their conversation with Christ, did not proceed from a demoniacal influence? We shall hereafter have occasion to consider the language in which the evangelists describe the cure of the demoniacs, and the disorder of the swine; we only observe here, that the facts themselves are referred to God.

If the foregoing observations are just, the history before us does not exhibit a single instance of the power and interposition of demons; though here, where we have samples of the highest degrees of insanity, proofs of their agency were most to be expected. At the same time, it represents God as the only being in the universe, who inflicts and removes diseases at his pleasure, not excepting those which superstition ascribed to evil spirits. On both these accounts, this history, on which so much stress is laid by the advocates of real possessions, seems to me to discredit, rather than confirm, the extravagant notions which the heathens and (from them) the Jews entertained of the miraculous power of demons.

4. This miracle prevented several great inconveni-

* P. 158, 159, 160.

ences

ences that would otherwise have attended the ministry of Christ. As he was sent only to the Jews*, so he never went out of their country†, and seemed backward to work miracles for the benefit of the Gentiles‡, in order to avoid giving unseasonable offence to the Jews, before the Gospel was offered them in its brightest evidence. Now the loss which the Gadarenes sustained, prevented both Jews and Gentiles in those parts from applying to Christ merely for the *temporal benefit* of his miracles, which was not their proper intention, and could not be dispensed to the Gentiles without increasing the prejudices of the Jews. At the same time, the behaviour of the Gadarenes, in entreating Christ to depart out of their coasts, serves to shew how ill disposed they were at that time to receive the *spiritual blessings* of the Gospel; which is a farther vindication of the conduct of Christ in declining all familiarity with them. With respect to the Jews, this miracle, which was performed during the most public part of Christ's ministry, and while his popularity was at its greatest height, was useful or necessary to strike an awe upon their minds, to prevent their raising tumults in his favour (as they were inclined to do), and their following him merely from worldly motives. The intention of this work in

* Matt. xv. 24. chap. x. 6.

† In Matt. xv. 21. we read, that Christ *departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon*, εις τα μερη Τυρου και Σιδωνος. Εις hic est *versus*, ut translatit Syrus. Nam εις τα μεθορια, inquit Marcus, *ad confinia Tyri et Sydonis*. Grot. in loc.

‡ Matt. xv. 21. 27.

some

some degree corresponded to the miraculous punishment of Ananias and Sapphira, which created a mighty reverence of the apostles, and prevented unbelievers from joining themselves to the Christian church, in order to share in its charitable donations*.

Lastly, though the Gospel, considered as a dispensation of mercy, was, with great propriety, confirmed chiefly by miracles of mercy; yet it was necessary there should be some examples of severity, to check the presumption of mankind in all ages, and to warn them of the danger of rejecting a divine prophet, who, though he eminently appeared as the messenger of God's love, was also the appointed minister of his justice.

Indeed, the destruction of the swine, in so very extraordinary a manner, could scarce fail of rousing the spectators of this miracle, and the numerous sufferers by it, into thought and reflection, however lost they might be to more ingenuous motives. The fact was of such a nature as to alarm the attention of the very enemies of Christ, and to provoke their inquiry into the evidence of it; for it carried with it the face of injury and injustice towards the owners of the swine, and consequently furnished them with a seeming objection against Jesus. A strict inquiry must soon convince them of the fact; and the fact itself, when maturely reflected upon, pointed out its author, God, who hath a right to dispose of the lives of his

* Act. v. 11. 13.

creatures.

creatures*. The life of the swine was of no importance compared with the conviction and spiritual instruction of mankind: the great object which Christ had in view†.

SECTION III.

THE most popular argument in favour of real possessions, is drawn from the language of Christ and his apostles, in performing and recording the cure of demoniacs, or in describing the case of these unhappy persons.

The sacred historians, it is alleged, affirm, that *they brought to Jesus those that were possessed with demons*‡; and in like manner, that to the apostles

* Some have thought that the destruction of the swine was a just ground for accusing Christ before the civil magistrate. But such an accusation must have been formed upon the supposition of the truth of the miracle, and consequently must have admitted, that Christ acted by an immediate commission from God (whose justice, notwithstanding the loss sustained, can no more be arraigned, when brute-creatures are destroyed in a miraculous manner, than when they perish by natural distempers). The enemies of Christ were too wise to proceed upon such grounds; and the immediate sufferers, instead of impeaching Christ's moral character, dreaded the continuance of so great a prophet amongst them, lest they should suffer some farther testimony of the divine displeasure.

† Non quod concesserit Salvator dæmonibus quod petebant, dixit, *Ite:* sed ut per interfectionem porcorum hominibus salutis occasio præberetur. Hieron. in Matt. tom. iv. p. 29. m.

‡ Matt. iv. 24. Mark i. 32.

they

they *brought them that were vexed with unclean spirits* *. St. Luke describes the damsel at Philippi, by saying that *she was possessed with a spirit of divination* † (*of Python* or *Apollo*).—Demoniacs, it is farther urged, are distinguished from the diseased: *They brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with demons* ‡. Possessions are mentioned as distinct cases even from lunacies §. The demons, it is said, knew Jesus to be the Messiah, and were forbidden to proclaim him under that character ‖.—In performing cures upon the demoniacs,

* Acts v. 16.

† Acts xvi. 16. See also ch. xix. 13. 16.

‡ Mark i. 32. The words may, however, as well be rendered, *They brought unto him all that were diseased, especially them that were possessed with demons.* (Compare v. 34.) Sometimes demoniacs are comprehended under the diseased, as was shewn above, p. 39, which seems to justify the version here given of the passage in question. The following passage in Luke also (ch. vi. 17, 18.) may be thus rendered: *A great multitude came to be healed of their diseases, even they that were vexed with unclean spirits.* But, should it be allowed that reputed demoniacs are in the New Testament contradistinguished from the diseased, this would only be one proof, amongst several others, of its adopting the popular language on this subject. With regard to Christ's commission to his apostles, which runs thus: *Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons,* Matt. x. 8. some think that casting out demons is as much comprehended under healing the sick, as cleansing lepers is. Possibly, however, neither of them is comprehended under healing the sick, any more than raising the dead is; and the several particulars here specified are spoken of as so many distinct species of miracles.

§ Matt. iv. 24. On what grounds the evangelical history distinguishes possessions from other diseases, and from lunacies in particular, was shewn above, p. 70.

‖ See above, ch. ii. sect. i. p. 146. 150.

Jesus

Jesus *rebuked the demons**, *and commanded them to come out*†. St. Paul said to the spirit of Apollo, *I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her*‡ (the damsel at Philippi). *And he came out of her the same hour.* In the case of the epileptic youth, Christ *charged the foul spirit to come out of him, and to enter no more into him*§.—The cure of demoniacs is described by the *expulsion or departure of the demon or demons*, by which they were said to be possessed, *If I by the finger of God cast out demons*‖. *The demon came out of him, and hurt him not*¶. *Unclean spirits, crying out with a loud voice, came out of many that were possessed***. *The demons came out, and went into the herd of swine*††. *Out of Mary Magdalene went seven demons*‡‡.—The ejection of demons or cure of demoniacs is distinguished from the healing of diseases: *Jesus cured many of their infirmities, and plagues, and of evil spirits*§§. *Behold!* (says Christ,) *I cast out demons, and I do cures*‖‖. The evangelical history affirms, *Jesus cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick*¶¶. *He*

* Matt. xvii. 18. Mark ix. 25. Luke ix. 42. Mark i. 25. Luke iv. 35.

† Mark i. 25. Luke iv. 35. Matt. 17, 18. Mark ix. 25.

‡ Acts xvi. 18. § Mark ix. 25.

‖ Matt. xii. 28. Luke xi. 20. ¶ Luke iv. 35.

** Acts viii. 7. See also ch. xix. 11, 12. †† Matt. viii. 32.

‡‡ Luke viii. 2. Compare Mark xvi. 9.

§§ Luke vii. 21. In the original it is, Jesus *cured many of infirmities, and plagues, and evil spirits.* In Luke viii. 2. we read of *women which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities.*

‖‖ Luke xiii. 32. ¶¶ Matt. viii. 16. See also Mark i. 34.

gave

gave the Twelve power against unclean spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease. Accordingly they cast out many demons, and healed the sick†.*—When the seventy, with great exultation, said to their Lord, *Even the demons are subject to us through thy name,* Jesus, with a seeming reference to this event, replied, *I beheld Satan, as lightning, fall from heaven.* He adds, *Behold! I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you‡.*—That I may not omit any thing on which the advocates for real possession lay any stress, I add, that they farther plead, that there are passages in the New Testament where demons cannot denote diseases of any kind. St. Mark calls the Gadarene demoniac, *him that had the legion§.* And our Lord represents the unclean spirit as *taking to him seven other spirits, more wicked than himself‖.* Now how, we are asked, can one man have a legion of diseases? or, can one disease, with deliberation and design, take along with it seven others of a more grievous kind than itself?

From the several foregoing passages of the New Testament, it hath been inferred, that both Christ

* Matt. x. 1. 8. In like manner, after his resurrection, he said, *In my name shall they cast out demons—they shall lay their hands on the sick, and they shall recover.* Mark xvi. 17, 18.

† Mark vi. 13. ‡ Luke x. 17. 20.

§ Mark v. 15. ‖ Luke xi. 26.

and

like manner we still speak of *St. Anthony's fire*, and of *St. Vitus's dance*, without acknowledging the power or existence of these saints. When we complain of *the hag* or *night-mare*, which is the name of a real disorder, resembling the pressure of some weight on the breast, imputed to a hag or incubus, do we not follow custom, without approving the hypothesis? Philosophers speak of the motion and path of the sun, though they know it never changes its place: they say, that it is in the spring in the constellation of the *Ram* (where it was in the time of Hipparchus, upwards of two thousand years ago), notwithstanding their allowing that the constellations have all changed the places assigned them by the antient astronomers; and that now the sun is in the spring in that part of the heavens where the constellation of the *Bull* is situated. So difficult is it to recede from those ways of speaking which were introduced by the antients, even after the reason of them ceases. They are retained, notwithstanding their acknowledged impropriety. Our best philosophers still use the common language concerning the *rising* and *setting* of the sun, though they know that it is founded in error and prejudice. They call that an eclipse of the *sun*, which they are very sensible is properly an eclipse of the *earth*.

The prophets of God also, as well as the professors of science, when they speak upon points of philosophy, adopt the common language, though grounded upon opinions universally allowed to be erroneous.

Our

Our Saviour says, "God maketh his sun to *rise**;" and the Psalmist represents this luminary, which is fixed in the centre of our system, as *running a race*†. When we read in Scripture, that the *sun knoweth his going down*‡, and that God *laid the foundation of the earth*§; we know that the expressions are popular only, and far from being agreeable to true philosophy. Calvin makes the same observation on that passage of the Psalmist, *He hath founded it* (the earth or world) *upon the seas, and established it upon the floods*‖. Nor are these the only instances that may be mentioned. The *dew* was thought by the antients always to descend from the sky, and the language of Scripture corresponds to this opinion: for it is called *the dew of heaven*¶, and represented as *falling on the ground***, *as dropping from the clouds*, and *the heavens*††; nevertheless, it hath been proved by plain experiments, that dew will ascend from the earth and the plants. The *manna* with which the Israelites were fed in the wilderness, though attended with several miraculous circumstances, doth not appear to have been of a different nature from our modern

* Matt. v. 45. † Ps. xix. 5, 6.

‡ Ps. civ. 19. See Ps. l. 1. The language of Joshua also, *Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon*, (Josh. x. 13.) alludes to a popular notion, now allowed to be false.

§ Ps. civ. 3.

‖ Ps. xxiv. 2. Non disputat philosophice David de terræ situ, ubi dicit, super maria fundatam, sed populariter loquens ad rudium captum se accommodat. Calvin in loc.

¶ Gen. xxvii. 28. Dan. iv. 25. ** 2 Sam. xvii. 12.

†† Prov. iii. 20. Deut. xxxii. 28.

manna, which is only an exudation from plants and trees. But as manna was till of late thought, like the dew, to fall from above, the Scripture says, *When the dew fell in the night, the manna fell upon it**. So that even *in relating miracles*, the sacred writers make use of popular expressions, on whatever hypothesis they were built. In *illustrating their doctrine* also, their expressions are accommodated to the general apprehensions of men, and appearances of things. *Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and DIE*, says our Saviour, *it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit*†. St. Paul likewise uses similar language‡, *That which thou sowest, is not quickened except it DIE*. Strictly speaking, the *seed* of the corn sown, which is the entire future fruit, and is a minute insensible principle, contained within the outward grain, *doth not die*. When this is killed by any accident it never rises. Nevertheless, the outward part or body of the grain is corrupted and dissolved in the earth: and this corruption or *death* (as it was called) of the outward part of the grain is necessary to make way for the production of the new corn from the seminal principle within. In this view only is it true, that the seed dies, in order to its being quickened, and bringing forth fruit. And this served to illustrate the respective arguments of our Saviour and St. Paul. Other examples might be added§.

But

* Numb. xi. 9. † John xii. 24. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 36.

§ When St. Paul prays for the Thessalonians (1 Thess. v. 23.) that *their whole frame, the spirit, and the soul, and the body* (ὁλοκληρον ὑμων, τo

But those already produced are sufficient to shew that the prophets of God make frequent use of the vulgar phraseology, though originally grounded on a mistaken hypothesis. Nor do they hereby countenance that hypothesis, or make themselves at all answerable for its truth or falsehood, any more than the naturalist doth, whenever he adopts vulgar expressions, and says, *the dew falls, the sun rises, sets,* or *is eclipsed.* The most accurate authors, it is universally known, do not, either in their writings or ordinary conversation, always speak according to strict philosophical truth. Now, if there are *some* undeniable instances in physics, in which the prophets of God, without incurring any kind of blame, employ the common language, though built on a false opinion: this may be the case in *other* instances. Nay, this, most probably, is the case *universally,* when they speak on subjects of natural knowledge. It doth not appear, that they did on any occasion frame a new language, in order to express themselves in per-

το πνευμα, και ἡ ψυχη, και το σωμα) *might be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ;* doth he not analyse human nature, in conformity to the doctrine of the Jewish rabbis and Gentile philosophers, who supposed man to be compounded of three distinct substances, the rational *spirit,* the animal or sensitive *soul,* and the *body?* See Nemesius de Natura Hominis, p. 2. Oxon. 1671. Vitringa Observ. Sacr. lib. iii. ch. iv. v. 1. p. 5491. St. Paul in Col. i. 16. speaks of *thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers,* concerning which H. Zanchius in loc. says, Crediderim apostolos per concessionem potius has voces, quibus Hebraei varios gradus inter angelos significabant, posuisse, quam quod certo noverint, rem ita se habere. Concerning the deaf adder mentioned Ps. lviii. 4, see Hammond in loc.

fect conformity to true philosophy. Why then might they not adopt the common language with respect to *possession*, considered as the cause of a bodily disorder? Why should it be taken for granted, that they express themselves with a philosophical exactness on *this* subject, when they neglect it on *others?* You can no more infer their belief of possessions, from their saying that some *had demons*, or *a spirit of Apollo*, than you can learn a man's system of philosophy from his saying that his friend hath *St. Anthony's fire*, or from his affirming that the sun *rises* and *sets* every day. To come still nearer to the point, we add,

II. That the foregoing general observation, viz. that it is no unusual thing with all sorts of persons, and particularly with the divinely commissioned instructors of mankind, to adopt the popular language, without designing to countenance the opinion on which that language was originally founded, holds true in the case before us; for they all speak in the same manner, on the very subject in question.

That this *might be* the case, was shewn under the former head, and appears highly probable in itself. Had history been silent, yet it might have been presumed, that many amongst the Heathens, being governed by sober reason rather than vulgar prejudices, and that still more amongst the Jews, hearkening to the voice of their inspired prophets, would despise and reject the entire system of the heathen demonology, and consequently the doctrine of possessions which was founded upon it. It might have been presumed farther,

farther, that those who rejected the doctrine of possessions, would nevertheless still continue to use the vulgar language in describing the case of those who were thought to be possessed. For thus it is in all other instances, and particularly in those mentioned under the former head. From them it appears that improvements in philosophy do not immediately alter the common modes of speech. The latter remain even for ages after the opinions which gave rise to them are exploded.

What is so probable in speculation, appears upon examination to be true in fact. Several passages cited above* serve to shew that the Greeks *by possession by demons* often meaned no more than *a natural disorder*. The word amongst the Romans, which originally signified a man actuated by furies†, afterwards denoted any madman. The Jews expressed different disorders by the names of different demons‡; and speak of those *as possessed by demons*, whom they regarded merely as being mad: they do this, even in cases where they expressly refer the madness to a different cause from demoniacal possession. This is done by Josephus in the age of the Gospel §.

The prophets of God under the Old Testament never expressly speak of demoniacal possessions; but we are certain, that had their occasions led them to do it, they would not have scrupled to describe reputed demoniacs in the same manner that all other persons did, without the least apprehension of being

* P 49, note *. † Furiosus. ‡ P. 51. § P. 50.

thought on that account to countenance the doctrine of real possessions. For they give all the objects of Pagan worship the same titles as the Pagans themselves did, *gods*, *lords**; and call the several sorts of diviners by names that imply a communication with demons, by the very names that were assumed by the pretenders themselves, to enable them more successfully to carry on their impostures, or were conferred on them by the superstition of the people†. This they did merely to characterize, not to allow, the pretensions, either of the heathen diviners, or of the objects of heathen worship.

Now, if both Jews and Heathens, and even the antient prophets, when speaking of possessions, or on similar subjects, adopt the common phraseology, when they did not design to countenance the opinion on which it was originally grounded, why might not this be the case with regard to Christ and his apostles? Why might not they as well as others speak of those as demoniacs, who were reputed or appeared as such, without designing thereby to give their sanction to the doctrine of possessions? Nay, it is certain in fact, and generally allowed by the most judicious advocates of real possessions, that our Saviour and his

* Dissertation on Miracles, p. 253, 8vo. p. 161, 12mo.

† Id. p. 272. 416, 8vo. p. 174. 266, 12mo. *Saul asked counsel of one that had a familiar spirit*, 1 Chron. x. 13. *Manasseh dealt with a familiar spirit*, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6. In like manner under the New Testament, when St. John says, (1 John iv. 1.) *Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits*; by *spirits* we are to understand, not those who were under *a divine afflatus*, but those who pretended to be so.

apostles

apostles do, on some occasions at least, use such expressions on the subject before us, as they could not design to have understood in a literal sense, or in their fullest import.

When the sacred historians tell us, that one person was possessed by *seven demons* *, and another by *a legion* †; is it not more natural to suppose that they adopted the phraseology of the Jews, and used it in the same general sense they did, than that they determined, by immediate inspiration, the exact number of demons by which each of them was possessed? Is it not the more reasonable to believe this is to be the case, as Christ commanded no more than *one* ‡ demon to come out of the man, in whom there was a legion? Understand this according to the letter, and what service was done the demoniac, who was still possessed by more than six thousand demons?

* Luke viii. 2.

† Mark v. 15. *Him that had the legion,* This may possibly signify no more than *him that said he had a legion.*

‡ *He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of him,* Luke viii. 29. Mark v. 8. How little the evangelists designed to make themselves answerable for the language of their country, and to speak with philosophical precision in describing demoniacs, appears from their representing the Gadarene demoniac sometimes as having one, and sometimes as having more demons. Mark calls him a man *with an unclean spirit,* ch. v. 2. and yet at ver. 12. he says, *All the demons besought Jesus;* and at ver. 13. *the unclean spirits went out;* and at ver. 15. he calls the person here spoken of, *the demoniac that had the legion.* Luke says, he had *demons,* ch. viii. 27. that *the unclean spirit* caught him, and that he was driven of *the demon,* v. 29. and that the *demons* went out of him, 33. 38.; using indifferently either the singular or plural number.

It was a very common opinion among the Jews, though not peculiar to them*, that evil spirits frequent desolate places. St. John alludes to this opinion †, and so doth our Saviour himself, in saying, *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places* ‡. But shall we represent *him*, in whom dwell all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, as entertaining this vulgar notion, only because he alludes to it, and illustrates his argument by it in his address to the Jews? Do not the most intelligent and judicious writers borrow comparisons from

* See Ode de Angelis, p. 691. and Sir Norton Knatchbull on Matt. xii. 43.

† *Babylon is become the habitation of demons*, Rev. xviii. 2. that is, "Babylon is become *a desert*." Compare the Septuagint version of Is. xiii. 21. Vitringa on Rev. xviii. 2. observes, Estque illa *popularis* opinio, antiquis jam populis recepta, in vastis desertisque locis regnare dæmones, Matt. xii. 43.—a qua populari sententia, ut *sæpe* alias fit, desumi potuit locutio, qua id solummodo intendit spiritus s. ut plenariam et præcisam doceat vastationem esse illis inferendam locis.

‡ It is added, *seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.* Matt. xii. 43. Luke xi. 24. That is, "It is commonly said, that if evil spirits, after having left a man for a while, return to him again, he generally suffers more violent symptoms than he did at first, and his case becomes more deplorable. Now this case is a just representation of yours: for notwithstanding some appearances of amendment under the preaching of the Baptist (Matt. iii. 7. John v. 35.), and the ministry of the Messiah; your vices, which were curbed for a time, will return with double violence, and bring down upon you heavier judgment than any

from fabulous animals and monsters*, as the griffon, the centaur, and the phœnix? Again, when Christ says on one occasion, *Come out, thou unclean spirit*†; and on another, *Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee come out of him*‡; shall we from hence infer, that he believed spirits to be dumb, deaf, and unclean? When he is reasoning concerning Beelzebub§, in a manner that seems to imply a belief of his power; he is only reasoning with his enemies upon their own principles‖; he knew that Beelzebub was a fictitious

any the nation hath hitherto suffered." Consult Lardner's Case, p. 199. Grotius on Matt. xii. 43, and compare 1 Pet. ii. 20—22.

The following remark was communicated to me by a very ingenious and learned friend. "Our Saviour did not introduce this comparison *abruptly*, but made use of it soon after curing a demoniac, who was perhaps then standing before him, and when the Jews charged him with casting out demons by Beelzebub the prince of demons. These circumstances seem to evince the propriety of using this comparison."

* Compare the Antient Universal History 8vo. vol. iii. p. 491.

† Mark v. 8. ‡ Ch. ix. 25.

§ Matt. xii. 26, 27. If Satan cast out Satan, &c. On this passage see Dissertation on Miracles, p. 388, 8vo. p. 248, 12mo.

‖ It was not unusual with our Saviour to argue with others on their own principles, though evidently false and groundless. In proof of this I appeal to Matt. xi. 12, 13. (*I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;*) where Christ doth not grant that the Scribes and Pharisees were righteous (for he was no stranger to their hypocrisy and wickedness), but vindicates his conduct, even upon their own supposition, that they really were as righteous as they affected to appear. Compare Luke xv. 29. (see also Matt. xi. 25, where Christ calls them *wise* and *prudent*, without allowing them to be really such.)—To Matt. xxv. 24, 25. where Christ argues with the

a fictitious* deity, and no more designed to admit his power, than he did to admit the power of Mammon, whom the Pagans acknowledged as the god of wealth, when he said, *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon* †. Lastly, Is it not unreasonable in the advocates of demonism, to understand our Lord *literally* in that declaration, *I beheld Satan, as lightning, fall from heaven* ‡? Do they not contend, that Satan had been cast out of *heaven*, many ages before the mission of the seventy disciples? From heaven therefore he could not, on their own principles, be seen to fall at this period. If by heaven they choose to understand *the air*, why do they maintain that the air is *still* the residence of Satan, and the seat of his empire? Without contradicting their own principles, therefore, they cannot explain these words literally, or concerning any sudden precipitation of Satan himself §, either from the air, or from the celestial regions. If you say that this language doth however imply that Satan

slothful servant, who reproached his lord with being an *hard man*, upon his own principles, merely to shew him that they concluded against himself.—To Matt. xii. 27. see Dissertation on Miracles, p. 392, 8vo. p. 251, 12mo.—To Luke xxiv. 37, 38, 39. explained, ib. p. 166, 8vo. p. 104, 12mo.—And to Luke xviii. 1—7.

* See above, p. 19. and 2 Kings i. 6.

† Matt. vi. 24. I acknowledge that *Mammon* may signify indifferently, either *riches*, or *the god* of riches, just as Ceres denotes corn: or the goddess of corn: but Mammon being used here in opposition to the true God, there must be a reference to this false god; and he is put for those riches over which he is thought to preside.

‡ Luke x. 18.

§ Bishop Warburton, p. 216. explains Luke x. 18. of *a sudden precipitation of the prince of the air, where he had so long held his empire:*

had

had formerly been one of the inhabitants and princes of heaven: I answer, that then the like language will prove the same concerning the king of Babylon; for of him it is said, *How art thou fallen from heaven*!* When Cicero reproaches Antony *with pulling his colleague down from heaven*†, was more meaned than that Antony had deprived him of all his authority? To fall from heaven is a mode of expression familiar to all languages, the eastern especially, and denotes the loss of dignity and dominion‡. And our Saviour here tells us, that he had a prophetic view of the sudden overthrow of superstition and idolatry, (usually described as the kingdom of Satan, or an adversary;) or of the speedy prevalence of true religion over every *opposing power*§.

To the foregoing examples I will add one from the writings of St. Paul. When he asks the Galatians, *Who hath bewitched you*‖? did he mean more than

* Is. xiv. 12. † De cœlo detraxisti, Cicer. Phil. ii.

‡ Is. xiv. 13, 14, 15. Luke x. 15. Rev. xii. 7—9.

§ *Satan* properly denotes *an adversary*, (see above, p. 10, 11.) and more especially an adversary of true religion. 2 Thess. ii. 4. 9. Rev. xii. 9. It is here explained by *the enemy*. Luke x. 19, *Behold, I give you authority over all the power of the enemy*, plainly meaning by the enemy, not one particular person, but all opposition. It was common with the Jews to use the singular number in the manner it is in this passage, in order to express the meaning of the plural. *Where is the wise? Where is the scribe?* That there can be no reference here to fallen angels, is evident from what was proved above (ch. i. sect. 1, 2.) that the spirits who were thought to possess men were human spirits.

‖ Gal. iii. 1.

to express the great absurdity of their conduct, without having the least intention of ascribing it to fascination? St. Jerome*, on this place, freely admits, that here, as in other places of Scripture, the expression is popular only, and accommodated to the opinion of the vulgar. And a modern writer†, as greatly distinguished by his candour as by his learning, and one of the ablest defenders of the demoniac system, observes, that the Greek word, which we render *bewitched*, "strongly expresses the *unreasonable turn* their minds had taken, so that one would imagine they had been deprived of the *regular use* even of their natural faculties."

Now, if the prophets of God, when speaking on the very subject in question, did, in the several forementioned instances, or in any of them, adopt popular expressions, without intending to give their sanction to those opinions on which they were originally founded, why might not they do so in *all* other instances relative to the same subject? Why might not they affirm that some persons were *possessed*, in a sense similar to that in which they affirmed others to be *bewitched*? Though they did not believe the existence and influence of Mammon, the reputed

* Usus sermone sit trivii, et ut in *cæteris*, ita in hoc quoque loco verbum quotidianæ sermocinationis assumserit.—Ex opinione vulgi sumptum putamus exemplum.—Quod si aliquis contradicit, exponat quomodo de communi opinione sit sumptum, vallis Titanorum in Regum libris, Syrenæ et onocentauri in Esaia: Arcturus et Pleiades in Job, et cætera his similia, quæ utique vocabula gentilium fabularum et causas et origine habent. Hieron. in Gal. iii. 1.

† Dr. Doddridge on Gal. iii. 1.

god

god of wealth, yet they scruple not to call wealth by his name; and they might therefore with equal propriety use demons for those dire diseases of which they were the reputed authors. Merely from their describing demoniacs in the common popular language, you cannot certainly conclude, that either Christ or his apostles* entertained the opinion to which that language owed its rise.

I do not remember that any persons contend for the apostles' believing the power of *the moon* over the disorder called *lunacy*, merely because they, in common with others, describe it by this name. Nay, some of the most zealous advocates for possessions expressly declare, that those called lunatics were not really such, but are so denominated in conformity to the opinion of the vulgar†. Nevertheless, the evangelists affirm in

* Dr. Lardner is of opinion, that the *evangelists*, at the time of writing their histories, *believed real possessions*, Case of the Demoniacs, p. 122. But this can no more be inferred concerning *them*, from their mode of recording, than it can be inferred concerning *Christ*, from his manner of performing the cure of demoniacs. The language of both was the very same; and the argument drawn from it, if it be inconclusive with respect to the one, must be equally so with respect to the other. The apostles, indeed, might early imbibe the prejudices of their countrymen with regard to real possessions; they might not be able to detect the error by a superior force of genius and penetration (which would have served only to obscure the evidences of their divine mission); and considered as an error of philosophy, it might not be corrected by immediate revelation: nevertheless, they have effectually confuted it by their doctrine concerning demons, as was shewn above.

† Hieron. in Matt. iv. 24. says, *Non vere* lunaticos, sed qui putabantur lunatici ob dæmonum fallaciam. And Cæsarius, quæst. 112,

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in express terms, that the people brought to Jesus *those which were lunatic*, as well as those *which were possessed with demons**. From this language it may with as much reason be inferred, that they believed in the power of the *moon* as in that of *demons*. And a *lunar* influence over diseases might with as much propriety be made an article of faith, upon the authority of the apostles, as a *demoniacal* one. It is equally evident, that with respect to both they only adopt the common language of the age and country in which they lived.

III. Christ and his apostles had sufficient reason for adopting the common phraseology with respect to demoniacs, (even supposing them not to approve the hypothesis on which it was grounded;) because it was employed to describe the real case of these persons, both the symptoms of their disorder and their cure.

At first view it may appear strange, that certain modes of speech which owed their rise to a false philosophy, should remain in use long after that philosophy is exploded, and be adopted without scruple by all sorts of persons. The reason, however, is not difficult to be discovered. These modes of speech, even when first introduced, express certain *outward* and *sensible effects*, as well as the *cause* to which they are referred. Nay, though both were originally in-

ε: μηδεν εκ των αστρων ενεργειτουνται η αδικουνται οι ανθρωποι, πως το ευαγγελιον σεληνιαζομενους λεγει τους επιληπτικους αφρουντας και ρησσομενους; αποκρ Σεληνιαζομενους φησ. κατα την προχειρον των πολλων υπονοιαν, μη χαρουντων ακουσαι το υψηλοτερον.

* Matt. iv. 24.

eluded

cluded under the same terms, yet the terms often continue to be employed in describing the effects, after a general alteration of sentiment concerning their reputed cause. This appears in the clearest manner from those examples specified above. *Lunacy* imported at first a kind of phrensy, as well as the influence of the moon over it; and it is now used by all sorts of persons for phrensy or madness in general, from whatever cause it is supposed to proceed. *St. Anthony's fire* and *St. Vitus's dance* always denoted certain bodily distempers, which were originally referred to the saints from whom they borrowed their respective denominations; but at present, at least when used by Protestants, signify merely those distempers, without any reference to the saints. The *Nightmare*, which was the name given to a spirit that was said to oppress and suffocate persons in their sleep, is still used to express the sensations we feel in the night, resembling the pressure of some weight upon the breast, notwithstanding our ascribing those sensations now merely to a stoppage of the animal spirits, or some natural cause. To *bewitch*, denoted at first to do mischief to the persons or property of mankind by the assistance of the devil; but now, excluding this idea, it often signifies to please irresistibly, or to produce effects scarce to be accounted for without fascination*. By the terms Ceres and Bacchus, the Heathens often meaned merely corn and

* "The charms of poetry our souls *bewitch*," says Dryden. *Who hath bewitched you?* is the language of St. Paul.

wine,

wine *, though they were the names of the deities that presided over them. The reason why philosophers speak of the *sun's rising, setting,* and *being eclipsed,* is, that this language, which was once thought conformable to truth, still agrees with and serves to express *outward appearances.*

The foregoing observations are applicable to the case before us. *Possession,* as we have shewn at large †, did, in the earliest ages, include insanity, no less than its apprehended cause. It was, indeed, from the symptoms of this disorder that the antients inferred the patient was possessed. Now, if it was the universal custom of antiquity, by the phrase *having a demon,* or *being possessed by a demon,* to describe certain outward symptoms; why might not Christ and his apostles use this phrase in the same sense?

* Fruges Cererem appellamus; vinum autem Liberum: ex quo illud Terentii, sine Cerere et Libero friget Venus. Cicero de Nat. Deor. lib. ii. ch. xxiii. Notwithstanding this way of speaking, no man was so absurd as to imagine that which he ate was a god; according to the observation of the Roman orator, Sed ecquem tam amentem esse putas, qui illud quo vescatur deum credat esse? In Euripides (Bacchæ, v. 275.) we read, Δήμητρ θεα, γη δ' εστιν. See Euripid. Helen. v. 1318, and the notes of Barnes.

† Chap. i. sect. 5, 6. In confirmation of this point I would observe, that the most judicious of those writers who affirm the reality of *possessions,* allow that insanity was included in this term, and even that the Greek physicians by demons meaned a species of phrensy that was curable by natural means. This is the case with regard to that learned and accurate critic, Beza, who, in his note on Matt. iv. 24. blames the translating δαιμονιζομενους by *furiosos,* the word being, in his opinion, too general, (vocabulo certe nimium generali.)

On

sense? To remove from these divine instructors of mankind every shadow of blame, we must remember farther, that words which seem to express a cause, and might at first express it, come in time to signify nothing but an effect, without containing any idea of the cause by which it was produced. To be possessed by a demon is a phrase of this kind, and often denoted mere insanity, without including in it demoniacal possession *. In this restrictive sense was the phrase sometimes used, even by those who asserted the power of demons to possess mankind, and particularly by the Jewish historian †. In no other sense could it be used by those who taught, as the sacred writers did, that there were no such beings as demons in the world, or that they were as void of power as if they did not exist.

"Why then," we are asked, "were not demoniacs called by their proper name of madmen, if they

On Matt. viii. 16. he thus expresses himself: δαιμονιζομενους, i. e. a dæmonibus obsessos, non simpliciter furiosos, quos vetus ecclesia σεληνιαζομενους vocabat, eos etiam meo judicio, intelligens qui interiore et a medicis sanabili furore corripiebantur, dilucida habentes intervalla. Nam et Græci medici quoddam istiusmodi furoris naturalibus remediis sanabilis genus δαιμονιον vocant.—Euripides in Phœnissis, δαιμονωντας vocat eos qui dæmonum agitatione *insaniunt*. The real fact is, that all the antients, under the term demoniacal possession, comprehended madness in general, or certain kinds of it; and that some considered it as a supernatural, others as a mere natural disorder. But no man's opinion of it could be learned barely from his use of these terms.

* Accordingly Castalio renders δαιμονιζομενους by *furiosos*. See above, p. 58, note †.

† Above p. 50.

were

were really such?" In answer to this objection, it may, I apprehend, be safely asserted, that the vulgar language, serving to express the outward and sensible symptoms of the demoniacs, sufficiently answered the end of language, the conveying to us a just idea of their disorder. Nay, the language of the evangelists is much more clear and determinate, and gives us a more perfect notion of the demoniacs, than a general declaration of their insanity would have done. For though the antients thought all possessed persons to be disordered in their understandings; they did not think every disorder in the understanding to be the effect of possession. Between different demoniacs likewise there was a great distinction made. The moderns reckon three species of madness, *the mirthful, the melancholy, and the raving:* which, variously compounded, together with anger and boldness, fear and sadness, create a great diversity of phænomena in maniacs. Now the precise difference or distinction between different madmen was well preserved by the vulgar language. For different symptoms of insanity were ascribed to different spirits, and from them received their respective denominations. Hippocrates, in his treatise on the epilepsy, says, *that each distinct affection of it was referred to a particular deity as its cause**. If persons imitated a goat, their disorder was attributed *to the mother of the gods*; if they made a noise like a horse, *to Neptune*; if they foamed and kicked, *to Mars*. He adds, *Wherever there are*

* Ες την νουσον ταυτην εκαστα ειδει του παθεος θεων την αιτιην προστιθεντες, p. 303. ed. Foes.

great.

great terrors in the night, and persons are beside themselves, jumping out of bed, and running out of doors; these things are said to proceed from Hecate, and the possession of heroes. Accordingly madmen were called (*cerriti*) the possessed by Ceres, or (*larvati*) the possessed by the ghosts of bad men*, or distinguished by some other appellation, according to the different symptoms of their respective disorders. These symptoms were expressed and ascertained by terms borrowed from their apprehended causes or authors. Or, in other words, they gave the names of demons to distempers; and these names accordingly described the nature of those distempers. The same manner of speaking was common amongst the Jews†. Kordicus was the name both of a demon and of a disease; of the demon who ruled over those who drank too much new wine, and of the *effect* produced by that excess. Hence it came to pass, that what was peculiar and distinguishing in the case of any person spoken of as possessed, the particular kind and effects of his madness, were well understood by saying, he had *a demon, an evil demon, an unclean demon, a dumb spirit, a deaf and dumb spirit.* In like manner, when we read that the damsel at Philippi had a

* Num larvatus aut cerritus? Plaut. Menæch. v. 4. 2. The cerriti were the most outrageous madmen, and seem to answer to the larvarum pleni.

Quæso quin tu isthanc jubes
Pro *cerrita* circumferri. Am. Quin facto est opus;
Nam hæc quidem ædipol *larvarum plena est.*
Plaut. Amphitruo, act. ii. sc. 2.

See Sykes's Inquiry, p. 14—17.

† Lightfoot's works, vol. ii. p. 211, cited above, p. 50, 51.

spirit

spirit of *divination* or *Apollo*; we are hereby informed what her pretensions were, and that she was subject to that peculiar kind of melancholy and madness to which enthusiastic divinatory fits were thought to be incidental. When it is related of some persons, that they had *seven demons*, or *a legion*, we do not hereby understand (as by some we are supposed to do) that they had so many different diseases; these phrases express the *degrees* of insanity (together, perhaps, with some diversity in the symptoms). Those who believed that one demon could disturb the understanding, presumed that a great number of evil spirits could disturb it still more, and produce more violent effects. Hence the different degrees of insanity were expressed by different numbers of demons. In the parable of the ejected demon, who afterwards returned to the man from whom he had been expelled, with seven other spirits more wicked than himself, the condition of the demoniac is supposed to become hereby more deplorable than when he was first possessed*. Mary Magdalene, out of whom went seven demons†, and the man with a legion more especially, were stark mad. These persons resembled those amongst the Romans who were said to be *full of ghosts*‡.

It being known what effects the antients described by possession, it is impossible we should be ignorant

* Matt. xii. 45.

† See what was observed above concerning Mary Magdalene, p. 62.

‡ See note *, p. 209, and above p. 47, note ‡.

what

what they meaned by dispossession. If the former phrase was expressive of a disorder, the latter must be so of a cure. The demon and the disorder were originally supposed to bear to each other the relation of cause and effect; and the ceasing of the effect was implied in, and expressed by, the removal of the cause. As the *entrance* of demons into any person denoted his becoming mad, so their *going out*, or *being cast out* of him, necessarily included his coming again to himself*. Nothing more than the outward effect, the restoration of the demoniac to his right mind, could be meaned by the expulsion of demons, when the phrase was used by those who did not believe the reality of possessions. From hence it follows, that when we read in the New Testament, that Christ and his apostles *cast out* demons, this must mean that they *cured* demoniacs; and it can mean no more. If by possession they intended only to describe a disorder, as we have shewn they did; the removal of it was all they could intend by dispossession. And therefore when we are told that *the demon threw down* a man, who is said to have an unclean spirit, *and convulsed him, and then came out of him and hurt him not*†; the meaning must be "that his disorder, which was of the kind ascribed to demoniacal possession, returned upon him with great violence; but though he had usually suffered much pain under the paroxysms of it, our Saviour, the very mo-

* See above, p. 61, and 171.

† Luke iv. 33. 35. Mark i. 23. 25, 26.

ment

ment he fell into his fit, interposed for his relief, prevented his pain, and restored him to a state of perfect sanity." Accordingly we find that the evangelists, in describing the miracles Christ performed upon demoniacs, say indifferently, that *he cast out demons*, or that *he healed the demoniacs*, and sometimes use both these phrases as equivalent*. When we read, that *Christ cured many of infirmities, and plagues, and evil spirits* †, and *that certain women had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities* ‡; is it not most natural, if not necessary, by *evil spirits* to understand a disease such as was originally ascribed to evil spirits, and hence came to be described by these terms? Infirmities, plagues, and evil spirits, seem to be mentioned only as so many distinct species of diseases, and as being equally the subjects of Christ's healing power. Evil spirits, thus understood, might be said with propriety to be healed, or the patient might be said to be healed of them. But to heal evil spirits, literally taken, or to be healed of them, is an unusual and improper manner of speaking.

From the foregoing observations it appears, that the evangelists were not under any necessity of departing from the common language of their age and country in reference to possessions: for it was employed, as well by those who asserted, as by those who denied, the reality of possessions, to describe the *symptoms* of

* *The demon departed out of him, and the child was cured*, Matt. xvii. 18. *Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child*, Luke ix. 42. See above, p. 40.

† Luke vii. 21. ‡ Luke viii. 2.

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the demoniacs, and their cure. The terms, indeed, were originally borrowed from the apprehended *causes* of both, the possession and ejection of demons, yet were they universally applied to the outward and sensible effects, madness (in many different kinds and degrees) and sanity. So far all must allow the vulgar language to be just, and that it conveyed a true idea of the subject; which is the only use or end of language. But this language was not only universally applied, but very often confined, to the outward effects just now mentioned; and in this confined sense must be used by the sacred writers. Nor are they at all accountable for the error that gave occasion to it. The astronomer, we have seen, uses many expressions that, in their strict and original meaning, are neither philosophically just, nor agreeable to his own conceptions, judging it sufficient that every one knows what *appearances* or *outward events* these expressions are used to describe.

From the principles here established, it will be easy to return an answer to all the other parts of the objection stated at the beginning of this chapter, which have not been already considered. The evangelists, it is pleaded, not only affirm that some persons were possessed by demons, and that the demons departed or were expelled from them, but expressly *distinguish* demoniacs from the diseased, and their cure from the healing of diseases. On what grounds the sacred writers distinguished possessions, which denoted a disorder of mind, from bodily diseases, was shewn above.

above*. There was just the same reason for distinguishing between dispossessions and the cure of those diseases. Disorders merely *mental* are of a different nature from those by which *the body* alone is affected. Now, if you understand both possessions and dispossessions, as they were understood and used by the antients, concerning certain outward effects, viz. the loss and recovery of *reason and understanding*, you will see with what propriety they are distinguished from mere *bodily* diseases and their cure.

The only part of the objection that remains unnoticed, is that taken from the manner in which Christ performed cures upon the demoniacs, when he *commanded the demons to come out*. "These commands," it is said, "manifestly suppose that the beings to whom they are addressed are capable of obeying them; and that Christ expected them to obey him from a conviction and awe of his divine authority." But it was no unusual thing with our Saviour to address the elements, and other objects equally insensible, as agents endowed with reason and liberty. To the dead, Jesus said, *Arise*. He *rebuked the winds and the sea*†, saying, *Peace, be still*‡. Lastly, he *rebuked a fever, and it left* the patient§. Why then might he not rebuke a demon, even supposing demon to stand merely for the disorder imputed to his influence, and speak in the same tone of authority to it, as to other things equally incapable

* P. 70. † Matt. viii. 26. ‡ Mark iv. 39.
§ Luke iv. 39.

of a voluntary obedience? In all the instances here mentioned, our Saviour's expressions are accommodated to the occasion, but they must not be interpreted with too much rigour. When he said, *Come out, thou dumb and deaf spirit*, he could not, as we have shewn, mean to declare his belief of there being spirits who are deaf and dumb. Nor could he expect to be heard by such spirits as are deaf, till by a previous miracle he restored or communicated the power of hearing. Is there any reason to believe that Christ ever performed any such miracle upon the devil or any other evil spirit? On the other hand, if, by *a spirit deaf and dumb*, you understand a disorder attended with these symptoms*, the language of our Saviour will not be liable to any peculiar exception. It was intended only to express the cure he was going to effect. And as demoniacs were apt to conceive of themselves as being inhabited and actuated by demons†, Christ's commanding the demons to come out, was perhaps the best method of signifying to the demoniacs, and assuring them, that their distemper should be removed; for they were not likely to believe the effect would cease, unless what they judged to be the cause was removed.

Hitherto we have been attempting to prove, that the first publishers of the Gospel might and did retain the common language on the subject under consideration, without making themselves answerable for the opinion on which it was founded; and that they had good

* See above, p. 37. † See above, p. 150, &c.

reason for retaining it, because it served to convey a just idea of the demoniacs, both of their disorder and their cure. But we may advance farther, and observe,

IV. That it doth not appear that they had any *divine warrant* to change the vulgar language in describing the case of the demoniacs, or that they were immediately and expressly commissioned by God to instruct mankind in the secret causes of any of those distempers which they were empowered to cure, and to rectify any physical mistakes concerning them. It hath been often observed, that their business was to instruct mankind in the doctrines and duties of religion. And this, without doubt, was their peculiar province. But we are, I apprehend, to conceive of each of them as having a particular commission from God, which they severally executed in its just extent, without ever deviating from it.

This appears to have been the case with regard to our *Saviour*. He plainly tells us*, *I have not spoken of myself: the Father gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.—Whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.* His commission to instruct the world did not extend to all the branches of knowledge †, and he never exceeded the limits of his commission ‡. Nor did

* John xii. 49, 50. † Mark xiii. 32.

‡ When Christ was applied to with so good a view as that of reconciling brethren, by dividing a disputed inheritance, he rejected the proposal, not merely from prudence, or to avoid giving offence, but

did he ever suppress any thing included in it. He clearly and explicitly revealed whatever messages to men he was charged with by God: *All things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you**. Now, among the several doctrines which Christ was divinely commissioned to publish to the world, we do not find the doctrine of possessions in the view in which we are here considering the subject, or as the physical cause of epilepsies and madness, nor any other point of philosophy.

Neither doth it appear that *the apostles* of Christ received any special revelation with respect to these matters. It is certain they have not affirmed that they received any such revelation; which, nevertheless, they ought to have done, had that been the case, that we might regard them as teachers of philosophy as well as religion. They have distinctly mentioned the several purposes for which the Spirit was imparted; and, it is to be presumed, have made a complete enumeration of them. We have no ground to charge them with a criminal omission of any one purpose for which they received the Spirit. It is an injury to their fidelity to suppose that they concealed from the world the full extent of their inspiration.

Now, if the instructions of the apostles, and the

but from the unfitness of his acting under the character of a magistrate, with which he was not invested, Luke xii. 14. When his own apostles were desirous of knowing his opinion concerning the Pagan doctrine of the pre-existence of the human soul, to which their question concerning the man born blind seems to refer, he declined speaking to that point of philosophy, John ix. 1, 2, 3.

* John xv. 15.

commission of Christ, did not extend to explaining the natural causes of diseases, it was evidently proper, if not necessary, that they should describe them in the manner that other persons did. To have introduced a new language on this subject, without an immediate warrant from heaven, would have furnished an objection against their character, and exposed them to the reproach of exceeding their commission.

Hence it appears how very absurd it is to urge the authority of the first publishers of the Gospel in support of the doctrine of possessions. On their authority alone it is that most Christians in the present age rest this doctrine. Bishop Warburton, in particular, builds his opinion on *the testimony of the Gospel**. But though we are to receive as infallible and divine truth whatever the apostles were intrusted to reveal, (for God confirmed their testimony,) yet on all points concerning which they received no revelation, or to which their commission did not extend, they speak as all other persons did. And consequently, before their authority is urged in the case before us, it must be proved that they have declared (in the manner they have done concerning those doctrines they were commissioned to publish) that they did receive a revela-

* P. 236. His lordship's proof of the Gospel's bearing testimony to the truth of demoniacal possessions, is, its speaking of demoniacs in the language of the age in which it was published: an argument that would establish the system of Ptolemy concerning the heavenly bodies, and other allowed errors in natural philosophy; as we have shewn at large.

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tion on the subject of possessions. But this is what cannot be proved; nor has any one ever attempted to do it. It is indeed too notorious to be disputed, that the language appealed to in proof of possessions is used only in describing the case of the demoniacs; and that the doctrine itself is never proposed as an article of faith, nor are we ever required to receive it as such. We may add,

V. As the first publishers of the Gospel *were not*, so they *could not be*, commissioned by God to instruct mankind in the physical causes of those diseases which they healed. At least, the question concerning the reality of possessions could not be directly and immediately determined by the authority of Christ and his apostles, without great impropriety.

For the miracles performed upon the demoniacs were designed for the conviction of *unbelievers*; they were the means used to bring them over to the faith; and consequently their nature was to be judged of and determined by the test of reason alone, *before* men believed, that is, before men could admit the authority of their performers, or pay any deference to their judgment. And therefore, if you say that Christ or his apostles interposed their authority to decide the present question, you not only affirm what cannot be proved, but you reproach these divine instructors with a conduct unbecoming and absurd; you make them urge their authority in a case to which it could not extend, and upon persons by whom it was not yet acknowledged, who ought to be left (and who accordingly were left) to judge for themselves, as the

circumstances of the case itself might seem to them to require. What St. Paul says concerning the gift of tongues, is equally true with respect to the cure of demoniacs; it is *for a sign, not to them that believe, but for them that believe not**. And if it was designed for the conviction of unbelievers, they must judge of it solely by the exercise of their reason.—Accordingly we find that natural reason is the only principle to which Christ appeals, when he is arguing with the unbelieving Jews, who reproached him with being a confederate with Beelzebub, the prince of demons: *If I cast out demons by the spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you*†. This passage is quoted by a learned writer‡, to prove that *Christ had informed them* (the historians of his life) *that this (the casting out of devils) was one of the essential operations in the erection of his spiritual kingdom.* The passage under consideration was addressed to the Scribes and Pharisees§, who ascribed Christ's expulsion of demons (of *devils* there is no mention) to the assistance of the prince of demons. And our Saviour is so far from asserting the *necessity* of this miracle, according to the view which this writer hath of it, that he doth not particularly explain the nature of it, nor interpose his own judgment concerning it: (his revilers, he knew, were not likely to be determined by it:) he only tells them, that in case his ejection of demons (so he calls his cure of demoniacs, in conformity to the accustomed modes of speaking) was a real miracle

* 1 Cor. xiv. 22. † Matt. xii. 28. ‡ Dr. Warburton, p. 210.
§ Matt. xii. 25. Mark iii. 23.

or

or divine work, then he was the Messiah. At the same time he entirely refers it to them to judge of the miracle itself, and whether God was the author of it.

Scarce can we commit a greater mistake than to urge the authority of the inspired teachers of Christianity in support of the doctrine of possessions. For the question concerning it, considered as a question of philosophy, they neither have decided, nor indeed could decide, by their own authority, for the reason here alleged.

With regard to those who have hitherto opposed the common hypothesis concerning possessions, it may be doubted whether they have sufficiently accounted for the conduct of Christ and his apostles in always using language conformable to that hypothesis. They have pleaded, "that an express and authoritative decision of this question would have done great injury to the Gospel, the prejudices of mankind in favour of the power of demons being too violent and inveterate to yield to evidence; and that to have begun with attacking these prejudices, must have prevented the conversion of multitudes, and led them to conceive of these first publishers of the Gospel as infidels and Sadducees." We may allow, that never were any public instructors more sensible than these*, that prejudices are often inflamed by a direct and formal attack, and that offensive truths can scarce be proposed with too much caution and reserve. Nevertheless, there are instances in which they began with

* Luke v. 36, 37. John xvi. 12. 25.

attacking the strongest prejudices of mankind, their favourite but fatal idolatries and superstitions. Nor did they act with any reserve with respect to demons (as we have shewn above), so far as the subject fell within the limits of their commission. Such prudential considerations therefore as some have suggested, are not sufficient to account for the conduct of Christ and his apostles, in always using the popular language concerning demoniacs, and never determining their case by an explicit declaration. For, if it were a matter of prudence not immediately to alarm the prejudices of unbelievers, yet might not believers have been better instructed? The true reason, as I apprehend, why neither our Saviour in performing, nor the evangelists afterwards in recording, the cure of demoniacs, ever expressly interposed their judgment concerning them, is, that their instructions did not directly extend to this case, nor could properly extend to it; the cure of demoniacs being a part of that evidence of the Gospel which must for ever be judged of by natural reason alone.

With regard to the advocates of real possessions, when they plead, "that, if their opinion be an error, Christ and his apostles ought to have corrected it, inasmuch as it was a very *dangerous* error, the support of much superstition and idolatry;" they not only overlook the propriety and necessity of that conduct which divine wisdom observed in the case before us, but presume to dictate to that wisdom. If we neglect to use the reason which God hath given us, and will adopt opinions without discerning any evidence to support

support them, it will be difficult to prove that God must necessarily reward our negligence and presumption by working miracles for our conviction, and work new miracles for the cure of every new error. It is much to be lamented that a creature of such limited faculties as man, instead of modestly inquiring what God *hath done* for his spiritual instruction, should presumptuously prescribe to him what he *ought to do*. If the imagined expediency or necessity of any particular plan would prove that it was pursued by divine Providence, then the Pope is a divinely appointed and infallible judge of controversy, and an everlasting bulwark to the Christian church against all error: which nevertheless doth not appear to be the case. In full solution of this objection, we may observe,

VI. That the first publishers of the Gospel, though they did not directly undertake to explain the natural causes of diseases, or any other point of philosophy, have, however, in the most proper manner, rectified the dangerous errors mankind were under with regard to demons, and thereby sufficiently secured the interests of true piety.

They corrected the false opinion which the world entertained of demons, both by their doctrine and their miracles. They did not, for the reasons explained above, speak particularly to the case of possessions; but they restored demoniacs to a state of permanent sanity, and thereby led men to reflect on the great improbability of their being liable to the

incursion of demons*. They proceeded farther: for, a thousand idolatrous and superstitious practices being grounded on a belief of the power of demons, the prophets of God under the New Testament, as well as those under the Old, openly taught what their miracles intimated, the utter inability of these spirits to do any good or evil to mankind†. This point is not only asserted, but fully proved‡, and shewn to be an obvious and necessary inference from the fundamental principles of the Christian revelation. The language employed in Scripture on this subject is so very clear and determinate, that the argument drawn from it against the power of demons cannot possibly be evaded but by saying, that, by the Gentile gods and demons, the sacred writers did not mean those gods and demons whom the Gentiles worshipped, but some other spirits whom they did not know, much less acknowledge and worship. If such a method of explaining Scripture be allowed, language can be of no use.—According to this rule of interpretation, the most explicit declaration from the apostles, that demons do not possess mankind, could have answered no end; for it might have been still said, that by possessing demons they meaned a different order of spirits from what all other persons did. There are prejudices too stubborn to yield to any evidence§. But whether we

* See above, p. 111. † P. 134. ‡ P. 138, 139.

§ Many are ready to imagine, that an explicit declaration of Jesus or his apostles concerning possessions would have necessarily determined

we will hearken to them or not, it is, nevertheless, an undoubted fact, that God's inspired messengers do constantly represent all demons without distinction as mere fictions of the human imagination, and clearly demonstrate their inability to produce any single effect.

Was it possible then for them to believe that Beelzebub or Apollo, or any other demon, possessed mankind? So far were they from entertaining and countenancing this opinion, that they have subverted the foundation on which it was built. This method of proceeding, which was dictated by divine wisdom, seems to be (as we have reason to expect it would be)

mined the judgment of Christians. (See bishop Warburton, p. 244.) But such a declaration, we have seen, might have been as ineffectual as it was improper. While the eye of the mind is closed by prejudice, the brightest evidence shines before it in vain. The plainest language in which Christ taught that a man could contract no moral defilement by what only passed through his body, and the clearest prophecies concerning his own death and resurrection, were not understood by the apostles, because repugnant to their preconceived opinions. Though St. Paul declared, that he *knew and was persuaded by the Lord Jesus Christ, that there is nothing unclean of itself*, (Rom. xiv. 14.) many Jewish Christians did not regulate their conduct by his opinion, but practised themselves, and even enforced upon others, the rites of Judaism, from a previous persuasion of their perpetual obligation. The very corruptions of the Gospel which were foreseen by the publishers of it, and which they have in express terms guarded us against, still prevail amongst those Christians whose minds are blinded by prejudice. Thus it is in the case before us: many, being previously persuaded that demons are powerful spirits, cannot receive the doctrine of St. Paul, confirmed as it is by all the antient prophets, that demons are nothing in the world. See above, p. 114, &c.

the wisest that could be taken. To explain the physical causes of those distempers which were imputed to possession, did not lie within the province of the apostles; and to describe the case of the demoniacs in new language was needless and improper. But to rectify the mistaken conceptions mankind had entertained of demons, and hereby to destroy not one error only, but the whole fabric of Gentile idolatry and superstition; this fell within the limits of their commission, and was indeed one principal intention of it. They proposed and established their opinion of demons when they were instructing mankind in the doctrines of the Gospel, or confirming Christians in the belief of them. Indeed, the arguments in proof of the nullity of demons, drawn from their authority as the divinely appointed teachers of Christianity, and from those fundamental principles of it, there being but one God, and one mediator between God and man, are such as can be offered only for the conviction of believers. These arguments produced their effect on those whose minds were in any measure open to conviction*.

Let us now lay together the several foregoing particulars, which have been urged in answer to the capital objection against our explication of the Gospel demoniacs. It is urged, "that if reputed possessions were altogether natural distempers, Jesus and his apostles, instead of rectifying, have riveted in the minds of men a very dangerous error and superstition,

* See above, p. 137—139.

by

by the manner in which they described the case of the demoniacs, and performed their cures upon them." In answer to this objection it hath been observed, that in speaking of these persons, though they made use of the common popular language of the age and country in which they lived, yet they did not hereby give their sanction to the opinion to which it owed its rise. For it was customary with all sorts of persons, with the sacred writers in particular, and our Saviour himself, to speak in the language of the vulgar, though known to have been originally grounded on a false philosophy. Our Lord and his apostles, when speaking on the very subject before us, do certainly on some occasions use the vulgar language, as their contemporaries also do, when they did not design to countenance the vulgar opinion; and therefore they may have done so on other occasions. Consequently their sentiments concerning demoniacs can never be inferred from the bare expressions they have used to describe them. There could be no impropriety in their adopting the common phraseology, because it was universally applied to outward and sensible effects, to the *symptoms* of the demoniacs and their cure, and often to these only, though originally borrowed from the apprehended *cause* of their disorders. They were not commissioned by God to instruct mankind in the nature of those distempers which they were empowered to cure, or to rectify any physical mistakes concerning them; and therefore could not deliver any instructions on this head without exceeding their commission. Nay, the question concerning possessions

could not be directly and immediately determined by the authority of Christ and his apostles without great impropriety; the miracles performed upon the possessed being a part of that evidence of the Gospel which must for ever be judged of by natural reason alone. The first publishers of the Gospel, however, though they did not enter into any philosophical disquisitions concerning the nature of diseases, yet did effectually subvert the entire system of superstition which then prevailed, by asserting the nullity of demons, and clearly shewing that to allow their power was to contradict the first principles of the Gospel. This they did on the most proper occasion, viz. when instructing men in the doctrines of Christianity. Now, as you learn a man's system of astronomy or physic from the account he professedly gives of it, not from his describing certain celestial appearances or bodily diseases in the language of the vulgar; so the real sentiments of the apostles concerning demons are to be gathered from their professed doctrine concerning them, not from their description of demoniacs, in which they employed, as it was fit they should, the language which then prevailed.

CHAP-

CHAPTER III.

It still remains that we point out the inconveniencies attending the common explication of the Gospel demoniacs, and the advantages which result from the account given of them in the two preceding chapters.

Some may be ready to ask, "Whence this zeal to shew that revelation doth not countenance the doctrine of real possessions? What prejudice can the Gospel suffer from this doctrine? And what advantage can it derive from the contrary one? The very adversaries* of real possessions allow that it was a matter of indifference with respect to the evidence of Christianity, whether those esteemed demoniacs were really such, or only laboured under a natural disease, inasmuch as in either case a real miracle was performed when their cure was effected. But what can be more evident than that the ejection of devils from the bodies of men is a greater miracle than the cure of natural disorders? What a lustre doth it reflect on the character of Christ, to see him first compelling them to confess his name, and then condemning them to silence! Was it not a wise dispensation, to permit the devil, about this time, to give some unusual proofs of his existence, power, and malice, in attacking men's *bodies*, in order to convince them what a

* Dr. Sykes's Inquiry, preface, p. 2.

dangerous

dangerous enemy he was to their *souls?* Above all, was it not fit, and even necessary, that he who came into the world as the great antagonist of the prince of darkness, should give a *sensible* and *public* specimen and proof of his power over him and his confederates by dispossessing them*; and hereby raise our hopes of his perfect triumph over them at the end of the world? In a word, the more carefully we examine the miracles of Jesus relating to the possessed, the more clearly shall we perceive their strict connection with the great end of the whole Christian dispensation, the redemption of mankind. Scarce, therefore, can we injure Christianity more than by denying the reality of diabolical possessions†. In answer to this reasoning, I observe,

1. That it is not supported by the testimony of Scripture. Neither our Saviour nor his apostles did ever assert or intimate that the devil enjoyed an extraordinary liberty at the time of Christ's coming into the

* See Dr. Warburton's Serm. vol. iii. p. 218. and Dr. Doddridge's Fam. Expos. vol. i. p. 211. 2d ed.

† I take no notice here of what is sometimes urged in favour of the common hypothesis, viz. "That the dispossession of devils by Christ, and the compulsive testimony they bore him, served to clear him from all suspicion of a confederacy with these infernal spirits." For we have already had occasion to observe, that though our Saviour speaks of the ejection of demons as an act of hostility against them, such as it was not natural to refer to the prince of the demons; yet this hath no relation to the devil (see above, p. 10.), and was spoken to his adversaries, merely upon their own principles, the only principles upon which he could argue with them. Dissertation on Miracles, p. 388, 8vo, and p. 245—8, 12mo. With regard to the testimony which, it is said, the demons were compelled to bear to Christ, it hath been

the world; much less did they attempt to account for his having such liberty then allowed him, or shew that it was fit that it should be granted. Not one of the reasons assigned for the devil's giving some unusual proofs of his power at this period, are taken notice of in the New Testament. The more weighty and important those reasons are supposed to be, so much the more difficult is it to account for this silence. If it was even necessary that Christ should exhibit a specimen of his triumph over the devil, by dispossessing him from the bodies of men, how comes it to pass that dispossessions are never spoken of in this view, by those who certainly best understood their intention? Whenever God commissions his messengers to perform miracles for the conviction of mankind, he instructs them to explain to the world the great ends proposed by them. This was the case with regard to all the prophets both of the Old and New Testament. They never left it, nor could they fitly leave it, to human conjecture to determine for what

been shewn, that it is not only groundless, but highly unreasonable to suppose that God should compel the devil to bear testimony to Christ, and then direct Christ to reject it, and even to work a miracle upon that lying spirit, that he might not discredit the truth he had published. See above, p. 156. The abettors of the common hypothesis would do well to consider, whether it be a good way of clearing Christ from all suspicion of acting in concert with devils, to affirm, that these wicked spirits were by him, or on his account, introduced into Judea, and that they were the first who proclaimed his divine character, though afterwards he enjoined them silence. On the other hand, understand the ejection of demons as, I apprehend, it ought to be understood, concerning the miraculous cure of a disease, and there will at once appear no more ground for ascribing to the devil this than any other miracle of the Gospel.

purposes

purposes their miracles were wrought. Nor can we learn what those purposes were in any other method than by the declarations of a prophet, or by the nature of the works themselves; and the latter will give us very little assistance without the former. The silence of Scripture, therefore, concerning what is supposed to have been the grand and peculiar design of the cure of demoniacs, is a sufficient reason for rejecting it; unless it can be clearly and certainly inferred from the nature of the work itself, which no one will affirm that understands it aright.

2. The entire reasoning we are now examining is built upon this false hypothesis, viz. that the spirits who were thought to take possession of mankind were *devils* or *fallen angels*. But we have shewn that possessions were always referred to such human spirits as were supposed to be converted into demons; that there is only *one* devil, and that he is never mentioned in Scripture in any connection with the subject before us. All the arguments therefore urged to prove the propriety and necessity of his extraordinary agency in the age of the Gospel, and of Christ's public triumph over him, by expelling him from human bodies, militate against the Christian dispensation; and, if they proved any thing, would prove that God ought to have allowed the devil a power, and afforded Christ a triumph, which were not granted.

3. The reasoning stated above proceeds upon another false supposition, viz. that possessions were more frequent in the age of the Gospel than at any other time; a supposition contradicted by all the monuments

numents of antiquity. So that, had it been true that the Scripture had referred possessions to the devil, it would not have followed, even from hence, that the devil gave any *unusual* proofs of his power at the commencement of the Christian æra.

4. Were it true, not only that the devil was the spirit who possessed men's bodies, and that possessions were more frequent in the age of the Gospel than any other; yet the cases of reputed possessions described in the Gospel do not contain any convincing *proof* of the power and interposition either of the devil or any evil spirit. The agency of demons (whatever spirits you understand hereby) is not an object of sight; their *entrance* into the human body falls not under the notice of any of our senses. There is not, therefore, the same *evidence* to be had of it as there is of a person's being *diseased* or *dead*. Accordingly the writers on demonology find it necessary to lay down rules for distinguishing* true from pretended possessions, and to appeal to certain outward supernatural symptoms (such as the gifts of tongues and prophecy†), as proofs of an immediate inspiration: thus making one miracle necessary to attest the reality of

* See above, p. 88.

† Several ill attested instances of persons inspired by demons with these gifts, are recited by the learned Dr. Macknight, in his Essay on the Demoniacs, p. 179, 180. The Christian revelation, however, in agreement with right reason, ever supposes the gifts of tongues and prophecy to be the effects of a divine agency. Why then do the advocates of that revelation assign them an infernal origin? A zeal for demonism hath led Christians, in many other instances, to obscure the brightest evidences of the Gospel.

another.

another. It seems then to be the general sense of mankind, what is indeed self-evident, that we cannot yield a rational assent to the reality of possessions, without some proof of it distinct from the fact itself, because it is not subject to the notice of our senses.

Apply these observations to the Gospel demoniacs. What evidence is there of their being really possessed? We have seen that their outward symptoms are so far from necessarily arguing the presence and operation of demons in the human body, that they are apparently the same with those in natural disorders; and that there is not a single circumstance attending their case, which furnishes an instance or proof of any supernatural agency. Nor hath the Gospel laid down any such rules as those just now mentioned, in order to enable us to distinguish true from pretended possessions, or offered any proof at all of the reality of possessions, though some such proof was apparently necessary, and even universally allowed to be so in all other cases. Nay, the most strenuous asserters of Gospel demonianism are forced at last to build their faith in it upon the supposed testimony of Christ*; which is giving up the very point they undertook to establish, viz. that the demons themselves gave evident proof of their power in the demoniacs spoken of in the New Testament.

If the foregoing observations are just, the very foundation of the reasoning stated at the beginning of

* *We Protestants urge the testimony of the Gospel, to prove the truth of demoniacal possessions.* Warburton's Serm. vol. iii. p. 236, et passim.

this

this chapter is not solid. It is built upon this principle, that the devil gave unusual proofs of his power when the Gospel was first published, by more frequently possessing mankind at that period than at any other: and this principle is thought to be supported by the case of the Gospel demoniacs. But neither were reputed possessions more frequent in the first age of the Gospel than in the preceding and following ages, nor are those related in the New Testament ever referred to the devil, nor do they contain any proof of any supernatural agency. From hence it follows,

5. That the ends said to be proposed by Providence in permitting the devil about the time of Christ to exercise an extraordinary power over mankind, and in expelling him from their bodies, are such as could not be answered by the cure of the Gospel demoniacs. These ends are, the convincing mankind how dangerous an enemy he is to the souls of men, and the affording Christ an opportunity of gaining a *public* victory and triumph over him, or of giving the world a *sensible* specimen and proof of his own superior power. But even were we to admit that those called demoniacs were really possessed by demons, yet the expulsion of demons would be a proof only of Christ's power over human ghosts, not over the devil, who is totally unconcerned in the present question. Nay, were we to grant farther, that by demons we are not to understand human spirits, but the devil and fallen angels, and that they did really possess mankind; yet their dispossession could not answer the ends which,

it

it is pretended, were proposed by them, because it did not contain a *public* and *conspicuous*, or indeed any clear and certain, proof of Christ's power over the devil and his confederates. What was observed above with respect to the *entrance* of demons into the human body, is equally true with respect to their *ejection* from it; it is not an object of sight, nor doth it fall within the notice of any of our bodily senses. You may know when a disease is cured, or a dead man restored to life; but what evidence is there that a demon is expelled, arising from the work itself? We find, that those who undertook this work thought it necessary to offer some external proof of the success of their enterprise. The Jewish exorcist spoken of by Josephus, ordered the demon as he went out *to overthrow a cup of water, placed at a small distance**, as a proof of his expulsion. And of Apollonius Tyanæus it is related, that with the same view he made the demon whom he cast out *throw down a statue*†. These impostors, void of shame as they were in many respects, had not sufficient assurance to expect the world would believe they had a power of expelling demons, without producing some evidence of the fact. We find nothing similar to this in the conduct of Christ: a plain proof that by the dispossession of demons he meaned nothing more than (what was obvious to all) the cure of a disease.

If you say, that though the reality of dispossessions cannot be demonstrated from the works them-

* Joseph. Antiq. lib. viii, ch. ii. § 5.

† Philostrat. de vit. Apol. lib. iv. ch. xx. p. 157, 158. ed. Olear.

selves,

selves, yet that it may be established by the testimony of revelation*: I answer, that by resting the reality of dispossessions on revelation, you make it merely an object of *faith*, not of *sense*; and consequently the ejection of demons could not, in this case, furnish a *sensible* and *public* proof of Christ's power over them, nor indeed furnish any proof of it at all to unbelievers. For the proof would not arise from the miracle, but from the declaration of Christ concerning it; and consequently the miracle would *pre-suppose* faith, instead of *begetting* it, and be useless to those for whose conviction it was designed. Equally useless would it also be even to believers: for what evidence can arise from the miracle itself, when the very reality of it is known only by the testimony of the performer? To propose *invisible* miracles as means of conviction, is not to enlighten, but to insult our understanding. Well may unbelievers ask, "Are such works as are totally hid from human view, the august proofs by which the wisdom of God saw fit to seal the divine mission of the great Redeemer? As reasonably might we be commanded to see in the dark, as to believe without evidence, or, which is the same thing, with such evidence only as we are not able to perceive." But in this, as in a multitude of other instances, the objections of infidelity are not founded upon genuine Christianity, but upon gross misrepresentations of it by Christians. Agreeably to the wisdom that shone forth in his whole behaviour, Christ performed such

* Those who build their faith in *possessions*, upon the supposed testimony of revelation, must allow that *dispossessions* can have no other support.

miracles as were open to the view of all men, and left all men to judge of them, as it was highly necessary he should, by the nature of the works themselves, not by any explanation of his concerning them. Instead of teaching men to credit the reality of his miracles, on account of his testimony, he demanded their assent to his testimony, on account of the reality of his miracles, which were subjected to the examination of their senses and natural reason, the competent and sole judges concerning them.

Now, if the dispossession of demons, even supposing the fact to be real, and the common explication of it to be just, be indiscernible by mankind, and unsupported by any evidence arising from the work itself, this miracle could not be *a public display* of Christ's power, or a *visible victory* over the devil, and a *sensible* manifestation of the glories of his conqueror. And as it could not answer this end, we may be sure it could not be designed to answer it by that wisdom which cannot err. Why then do Christians, without any authority from revelation, assert the propriety and necessity of Christ's giving *a conspicuous* specimen of his power over the devil, by dispossessions, when it is so obvious that no such specimen was or could be afforded thereby, on any interpretation of demoniacal possessions? Why will not they place the important doctrine of man's redemption by Christ, on its proper basis, the express and repeated testimony of the divine word? Why do they ground it on the grossest fables of the idolatrous Heathens, to which it bears no manner of relation *?

* See above, p. 87.

Happy

Happy would it be for the Gospel, would its learned advocates content themselves with explaining and vindicating those evidences of its divinity, which the Gospel itself offers, and rely less on arguments of their own invention. The last method may be more flattering to the human mind; but it ever exposes the cause it is meant to serve. It is indeed as indecent as it is dangerous, for the wit of man to dictate to divine wisdom what measures it ought to pursue.

6. It is urged, "that the ejection of demons is a *greater* miracle than the cure of natural disorders." But this may as easily be denied as affirmed*, without any great fear of contradiction, it being difficult to determine with certainty concerning miracles so very different in their natures †, which of them may require the superior degree of power. Besides, unless we knew exactly the degrees of power possessed by demons, how can we determine what degrees of power are necessary to dislodge them from the bodies of men? We need not however enter into this question; the principles just now established being a sufficient reply to the objection we are here considering. Miracles designed for the conviction of mankind, as those of Christ were, must be obvious to the senses of mankind: for otherwise they cannot answer the end proposed by them. The bare ejection of demons,

* An divinam Christi virtutem gravissimorum morborum sanationes, jussu illius momento temporis peractæ, minus patefaciunt; quam malorum geniorum ex hominum corporibus expulsiones? Mead's Medic. Sacr. præf. p. 7.

† Dissertation on Miracles, p. 129, 8vo. and p. 75, 12mo.

therefore, how great a miracle soever it may be in itself, or how much superior to the cure of bodily disorders, is *no miracle* at all with regard to *mankind*, can carry no conviction to them, because it doth not fall under the notice of their senses. In a word, inasmuch as there is no clear and certain proof of the reality either of possessions or of dispossessions, Christianity can derive no advantage from the common doctrine concerning them*.

* I omitted to take notice, in the beginning of this chapter, of an advantage which a learned person supposes that Christianity derives from the common doctrine; because it hath not hitherto, I believe, received the sanction of any other writer. It is not fit, however, that it should be quite overlooked. He pleads, that the expulsion of evil demons by Christ, cuts off that subterfuge against his miraculous cures, which supposes them to be the effect of *a strong imagination*, by which the devil (according to his conception of him) could not be affected. Warburton's Serm. vol. iii. p. 238—241. I do not undertake to determine how great the force of imagination may be in demons, in the sense in which this word is used by this writer, nor how far it may be objected against his own hypothesis, that demons had such a strong previous persuasion of Christ's power, that they scarce left room for the exertion of it in their expulsion. I would only observe, that if any one be capable of believing that Christ's cures of all the various kinds of diseases to which mankind are liable, performed in an instant, without the use of any natural means, on the absent as well as on those who were present, especially when considered in their connexion with his other miracles, such as his giving limbs to the maimed, and life to the dead, and his controlling the elements; if any one can believe that all these things are the effects of fancy, he will hardly fail to ascribe possessions (the symptoms of which are at best so disputable) to the same cause. Nor, indeed, will it be an easy matter to afford him evidence to his satisfaction. The antient prophets, though they performed miraculous cures, are never said to have confirmed the divinity of those works by casting out demons.

7. On

7. On the contrary, this doctrine doth Christianity the greatest prejudice in many respects.

With some, perhaps, it may weigh but little to observe, that the common explication of the Scripture demoniacs gives occasion to numberless superstitions*; particularly to those shameless impostures, the possessions and exorcisms of the Roman church†; and thus discredits the wonderful cures performed by Christ upon demoniacs, and brings disgrace upon the Christian name. If you choose to call this only *an abuse* of that explication, it is nevertheless such an abuse as every Christian should wish to see prevented or removed, especially as it hath occasioned a vast effusion of human blood. But in truth, to represent the Gospel as authorizing the doctrine of possessions, hath *a natural* and *necessary tendency* to rivet this superstition in the minds of Christians, which in every age hath been productive of the greatest mischief. A learned writer‡, of whom we have had frequent occasion to take notice, affirms, *that it is an unquestionable fact, that the evangelic history of the demoniacs hath given occasion to the most scandalous frauds, and sottish superstitions, throughout almost every age of the church, the whole trade of exorcisms; accompanied with all the mummery of frantic and fanatic agitations, having arisen from hence.* And this celebrated writer would willingly persuade the

* See above, ch. i. sect. ix. p. 100, and Dissertation on Miracles, p. 101, 8vo. and p. 63, 12mo.

† Mead's Preface to his Medic. Sacr. p. 4.

‡ Dr. Warburton's Serm. vol. iii. p. 241.

world that these evils are the consequence of the anti-demoniac system*, self-evident as it is that they wholly arise from his own. But his argument proceeds on a supposition neither true in itself, nor admitted by those against whom he is disputing, *that Jesus and his apostles, instead of rectifying the people's follies and superstitions on this head, chose rather to inflame them, by assuring certain of the distempered that they were really possessed by evil spirits*†. After what hath been already offered on this subject, I will not say any thing in vindication of Christ and the evangelic history from the false imputation of asserting the doctrine of demoniacal possessions. Nor will I affront the reader's understanding, by proving that those who deny this doctrine are not answerable for its abuse. What those have to answer for, both to God and to mankind, who too hastily represent the Gospel as asserting and supporting this doctrine, when they themselves are sensible of its pernicious tendency and effects, I leave them to consider.

This doctrine prejudices Christianity in another view. It hath been shewn that all the symptoms ascribed to the Gospel demoniacs are such as belong to natural disorders; and therefore, by asserting that revelation ascribes these disorders to a supernatural cause, we do revelation the most material injury; we set it at variance with reason and experience, and fix an indelible reproach on those who professed to be commissioned by God to publish it to the world.

* P. 241. † P. 242.

Again,

Again, the common doctrine concerning possessions affects the very foundation on which the Gospel is built, the evidence of miracles in general, and the miraculous infliction and cure of diseases in particular.

If demons can inflict grievous diseases, deprive men of their reason and senses, render them dumb and blind, and cause them to suffer the most exquisite torments, they can work miracles: for the infliction of a disease by the agency of any spiritual being, answers to the just definition of a miracle, as an effect produced in the system of nature, contrary to the general rules by which it is governed. All diseases so inflicted are ever represented in Scripture as genuine miracles, and as full and sufficient tests of a divine interposition. When Zacharias was struck *dumb*, and Elymas *blind*, ought we not, according to the New Testament, to conceive of these effects as real miracles, and to refer them to God alone? Now, if evil spirits are capable of producing the very same effects, how can they mark the immediate hand and agency of God?

Let us next consider how the doctrine of demoniacal possessions affects another species of miracles, the cure of demoniacs. If you understand the ejection of demons in the literal sense, abstracted from the cure of bodily disorders, the miracle in this case is not only secret and insensible, and therefore not adapted to the conviction of mankind (as was observed above), but is evidently such as lies within the compass of a demoniacal power. For if demons can

enter, they can certainly *quit*, the bodies of mankind. Thus you absolutely destroy the validity of one of the most illustrious attestations to Christ's divine commission, his expelling demons, or restoring demoniacs to the regular exercise of their rational faculties. If you understand the ejection of demons, as including in it the cure of such disorders as are supposed to proceed from the influence of demons, you still destroy the credit of Christ's cure of demoniacs. For, if demons can *inflict diseases*, why may not they as easily *remove them*? The Fathers expressly taught, *that demons contrived to cure the horrible diseases they had inflicted, by first prescribing remedies, and afterwards ceasing to afflict the patient* *. This observation is not without foundation. If, for example, demons, by making some alteration (a very slight one would suffice) in the organ of vision, or by placing some external obstacle before it, can deprive men of their sight, what can prevent them from restoring it? Nevertheless, neither reason nor revelation allows them this power. *Can a demon open the eyes of the blind* †? is the language of common sense. This miracle is mentioned both by the antient prophets ‡ and by our Saviour himself §, as one of the peculiar glories of the Messiah.

* Lædunt primo, dehinc remedia præcipiunt ad miraculum nova, sive contraria, post quæ desinunt lædere, et curasse creduntur. Tertull. Apol. c. 22. Vid. Cyprian de Idol. Van. p. 206.—Minucii Felicis Octav. cap. 27. The learned bishop Stillingfleet, notwithstanding his zeal to maintain the reality of possessions, doubted whether they did not *disparage* the miracles of our Saviour: see above, p. 77.

† John x. 21. ‡ Is. xxxv. 5, 6. § Matt. xi. 5.

The

The doctrine of real possessions destroys the authority of miracles in general, and the use which the Scripture makes of them, as in themselves authentic evidences of a divine mission. If demons can unite themselves to a human body, in the same manner that the soul is united to it by God, so as to govern all the organs of it; if they can deprive men of their sight, and speech, and reason, and then restore them to the use of these faculties, they can rival the glory of the prophets of God. Can there be a more stupendous miracle than that performed upon the herd of swine, in number two thousand, who were all in the same instant seized with madness, and rushed violently into the sea? Now, if demons are able to perform such great miracles as this, and the other here specified, and can also impart the gifts of tongues and prophecy (a power many ascribe to them *), to what other miracles are they not equal? Unless men can shew with certainty how far the power of the devil extends, and enable us to distinguish between diabolical and divine miracles, in a very different manner from what they have hitherto done (which hath chiefly been by calling them by different names †), they utterly destroy the

* See above, p. 235.

† See an Examination of Mr. Le Moine's Treatise on Miracles, sect. i. ii.

Le Moine, after Fleetwood, and several ingenious foreigners, undertook to shew that none but God can perform true miracles; these works, in his opinion, requiring an infinite and incommunicable power. At the same time this learned writer, and those whom he copies, allow the devil a power of *imitating* what they call true miracles, or, at least, of producing effects contrary to the fixed order of events, which perfectly answer to a just definition of miracles.

the authority and true use of miracles, and thereby subvert the foundation on which Christianity is built.

8. On the other hand, the true explication of the Gospel demoniacs establishes the certainty, and displays the full glory, of the miracles performed upon them. These miracles are always spoken of in the New Testament with singular emphasis and distinction. Scarce are any other miracles more frequently and circumstantially described*. It required an extraordinary degree of faith to undertake them, especially when the distemper was violent and inveterate: for in reference to a case of this nature, in which the faith of the apostles had failed them, our Saviour says, *This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting* †:

racles. But it is in words only that these writers differ from those who ascribe true miracles to the devil. And it is the most egregious trifling, to appropriate these works to God, unless they point out the difference between diabolical and divine operations, and enable us clearly to distinguish the one from the other; which they have not attempted to do, but contented themselves with resolving to give the name of *miracles* to the one, and to call the other only *great and astonishing things.*

* Witness the following cases: 1. The demoniac in the synagogue of Capernaum, Mark i. 23. Luke iv. 33. 2. The Gadarene demoniac, or demoniacs, Matt. viii. 28. Mark v. 1. Luke viii. 26. 3. The dumb demoniac, Matt. ix. 32. Luke xi. 14. 4. A demoniac blind and dumb, Matt. xii. 22. 5. The Canaanite's daughter, Matt. xv. 21. 6. The demoniac who was lunatic, dumb, and deaf, Matt. xvii. 14. Mark ix. 17. Luke ix. 38.—Out of Mary Magdalene Christ ejected seven demons, Luke viii. 2. But of this, and many other cases, we have only a general account.

† Matt. xvii. 21. Mark ix. 29. Compare Luke ii. 37. Acts x. 32. where prayer and fasting are joined together. See Dr. Lardner's Case, p. 144. Dr. Sykes's explication of this passage is well refuted in the excellent Dr. Doddridge's Expos. vol. ii. p. 13. 2d edit.

"Such

"Such difficult miracles are not effected without such a full dependence upon the divine power as is not to be acquired but by continued devotion, such as is usually accompanied with abstinence." The Seventy were filled with exultation and triumph when they found themselves enabled to cure demoniacs; *Lord, even the demons* (the disorders ascribed to the possession of demons) *are subject to us through thy name**. Whenever Christ performed these miracles, the spectators were filled with religious astonishment and awe: *They were amazed, insomuch that they questioned amongst themselves, saying, What thing is this? What NEW doctrine is this? With authority commandeth he the unclean spirits, and they obey him*†.

In order to understand this language, we must recollect, that in our Saviour's time there were, amongst the Jews as well as amongst the Pagans, many impostors who pretended to the power of expelling demons‡. Some undertook to draw evil spirits out at the nostrils§; others engaged only in general to drive them away from the persons whom they possessed. To effect their expulsion, they not only made use of adjuration and charms‖, but also of

* Luke x. 17.

† Mark i. 27. See also ch. v. 20. Luke iv. 36. ch. xi. 14. Compare Mark iv. 41. Luke viii. 25.

‡ Matt. xii. 27. Dissert. on Miracles, p. 398, 8vo. p. 251, 12mo.

§ Joseph. Antiq. lib. viii. cap. 2. § 5.

‖ See Whitby and Grotius on Matt. xii. 27. Their adjurations in the name of the God of Abraham were used as a charm, Origen. contr. Cels. lib. i. p. 17. and lib. iv. p. 184. Joseph. Antiq. lib. viii. c. 2. § 5. and Middleton's Free Inquiry, p. 84.

strong

strong smells*, and other natural remedies†. This was a branch of the magic art (which was founded upon the idolatry and superstition of the Heathens); and what credit it had was supported in part by the efficacy of drugs administered to the patient, but principally by fraud. The proof of the expulsion of demons was, not the perfect and supernatural cure of the demoniac‡, but the compelling the demon, as he went

* Hence it hath been said, that demons were rather suffocated or *stunk out*, than *cast out*, of the bodies of men. See Weston's Rejection of Christian Miracles, p. 231.

† See what occurs in Josephus (Antiq. lib. viii. cap. 2. § 5.) concerning the antidemoniac art, taught by Solomon, and the application of a ring with a root in it to the nostrils of the patient, and also what the same author says concerning the plant Baaras, and its virtue in driving away demons, Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 6. § 3. Compare Tobit, cap. vi. Justin observes (cont. Trypho, p. 311.), ὡς μεν τοι οἱ ἐξ ἡμων ἐξορκισται, τη τιχνη, ὁσπερ και τα ἀθη, χρωμενοι ἐξορκιζουσι, και δημιαμασι και καταδεσμοις χρωνται. Concerning the effects of music in driving away demons, see Joseph. Antiq. lib. vi. cap. 8. § 2. cap. 11. § 2.

‡ In the cases referred to by Josephus (Antiq. lib. viii. cap. 2. § 5.), which (according to Dr. Sykes, in his Inquiry, p. 33.) were the same with the Cerritus of Serenus Samonicus, the demoniac might be relieved by strong smells, or other natural remedies. But it is a thing utterly incredible in itself, as well as destitute of all manner of proof, that the power of superior spirits should give way to that of men; or that God should succeed the attempts of superstition and imposture. A remarkable instance of the failure of such attempts is related Acts xix. 19. See some other proofs of the inefficacy of the Jewish exorcisms, Dissertation on Miracles, p. 394. note l, 8vo. p. 252, note ‡, 12mo. Nor is this inconsistent with Matt. xii. 26, 27, as is shewn p. 236, &c. The Christian exorcists also, who swarmed in the primitive church, and were too much countenanced

went out, to overturn a statue or vessel of water at some distance*. Now, though Christ took no pains to establish the reality of those miracles which he performed upon demoniacs, yet the people, at the sight of them (deluded as they had hitherto been by the artifices of their countrymen), are filled with the greatest astonishment, and freely acknowledge, *It was never so seen in Israel*†. What was it that occasioned this extraordinary surprise, and was esteemed quite without example till this time? It could not be the bare expulsion of demons; both because this, abstractedly considered, is no outward and sensible effect; and because it was no more than what they thought their own exorcists were able to accomplish. What then was it, or could it be, that they had never seen before, and could not now see without the strongest emotions of mind, but *the outward and visible miracle*, the cure of those terrible disorders which were antiently ascribed to the possession of demons, together with the sovereign manner in which this miracle was performed by Christ, without the use of any natural means?

If you consider more particularly the true nature of this miracle, you will see the reason, both of the great stress laid upon it in the New Testament, and of the powerful effect produced by it upon the spectators.

countenanced by the Fathers of it, had as little success as their predecessors amongst the Jews and Pagans. The cure of the demoniac, if it ever took place, was a work of time. See Middleton's Free Inquiry, p. 92. Dr. Jortin's concessions, in his Remarks on Ecclesiastical Hist. vol. i. p. 242. and Mr. Jos. Mede, p. 30.

* See above, p. 238. † Matt. ix. 33. Compare Mark ii. 12.

The

The Gospel demoniacs were afflicted with madness, in all its most violent degrees, and their madness was, in some cases, attended with confirmed epilepsies. These terrible maladies (the symptoms of which are obvious to all) affect the mind as well as the body, and were thought by the antients greatly to exceed the power of natural causes. Under these disorders, some were known to have laboured for a great number of years, others from their very childhood. Some at the instant of their being cured by Christ suffered the most violent paroxysms of these disorders. To heal such maladies, and restore those afflicted with them to perfect soundness both of body and mind, in an instant, without the use of natural remedies, and with the same voice of authority as when Christ rebuked the winds and the sea, or called forth the dead, is one of the greatest of miracles, not only an *outward* and *sensible*, but a most *illustrious* and *astonishing*, display of the power and presence of God.

No wonder, therefore, that when Christ healed the epileptic youth, who was *lunatic*, and *sore vexed* with a demon (that is, both an epileptic and a maniac), we are told, that the spectators *were all amazed at the mighty power of God**. When he restored the demoniac, who was *blind* and *dumb*, to his sight and speech, the people regarded the miracle as the very characteristic of their Messiah, crying out, *Is not this the son of David*†? language which implies,

* Luke ix. 43. † Matt. xii. 23. Compare John vii. 31.

that, to their apprehension, the Messiah himself could not perform a greater miracle. So bright an impression of the divinity did it bear upon itself, that our Saviour (in answer to his enemies, who, from mere malice, disparaged it), instead of entering upon a vindication of it, which was needless, only exposes the absurdity of their censure of it, upon their own principles*. Like one who knew what conviction it was fitted to carry to the human mind, he draws the following conclusion from it, *If I cast out demons by the spirit of God, then is the kingdom of God come unto you*†: "If I restore demoniacs to their right mind by a divine power, the kingdom of the Messiah is certainly erecting amongst you." Christians need not be ashamed to acknowledge that they regard *the ejection of demons*, if truly explained, as one of those august proofs of the mission of their Redeemer, which were designed to recommend him to the reverence of mankind in all ages. It is well adapted to answer the same benevolent end with all the other miracles of the Gospel, which were both performed and recorded, *that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing we might have life through his name*‡.

* Dissertation on Miracles, p. 392, 8vo. p. 251, 12mo.

† Matt. xii. 28. ‡ John xx. 31.

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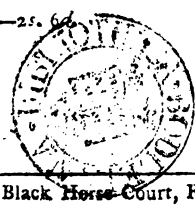

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